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*W. Leith  
At.*

THE  
SEVEN AGES

OF  
HUMAN LIFE.

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OLD AGE.

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(NOT PUBLISHED.)

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## INTRODUCTION.

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IN the following pages it is proposed to embrace the sixth and seventh ages of Man, the autumn and winter of Human Life. The first chapter, on the Durability of Human Life, is divided into two sections; one relating to the number of years, and the other to the duration of beauty. The second chapter comprises the dotages, infirmities and excentricities of decrepitude. The third chapter includes the solaces, useful occupations, and honors of old men; being a sort of *L'allegro* to the *Il Penseroso* of the preceding chapter.

If any reader should find fault with some of the writers we introduce, who may cast ridicule upon the second childhood of Great Men, I can only offer for them the excuse of Rousseau

in the following epigram, which is another version of "All the World's a Stage."

Ce monde-ci n'est qu'un œuvre comique,  
Ou chacun fait des rôles differens,  
Là, sur la scene, en habit dramatique,  
Brillent prelats, ministres, conquerans.  
Pour nous vil peuple assis aux derniers rangs,  
Troupe futile, et des grands rebutée,  
Par nous d'en bas la piece est ecoutée ;  
Mais nous payons utiles spectateurs,  
Et si la piece est mal représentée,  
Pour notre argent nous sifflons les acteurs.

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# THE AGES OF HUMAN LIFE.

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## CHAPTER I.

### ON THE DURABILITY OF HUMAN LIFE.

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#### SECTION I.

##### *The number of years.*

WHILST the funeral of Prince Henry, son of James I., was passing along Cheapside, Lord Leicester, who had been lounging at a bookseller's stall till it arrived, observed to some persons around him that "such a mourning had never been seen in England." Upon which an old beggar-woman, who was standing by, said, "No, never since the death of Prince Arthur." Upon being asked what she meant? she said, she recollected the funeral of Prince Arthur (elder brother of Henry VIII.) very well. Lord Leicester, after further inquiry concerning the old woman, gave her a weekly allowance at this house, which she received for between two and three years, when she ceased to call for it, and was heard of no more. Prince Arthur died in 1501, and Prince Henry in 1612. The public funerals of those times would scarcely be forgotten even by very young children who might witness them. At Prince Henry's funeral there were 2000 mourners in the procession; a hearse with the coffin exposed was

drawn by eight black horses ; on the coffin was a full length effigy of the Prince wearing his coronet, the garter and robes ; this was bound to the coffin, and supported by two cushions.

Sir William Temple, who states that the incident just mentioned was related to him by Lord Leicester, also speaks of a set of Morrice dancers in the reign of James I. composed of ten men, a Maid Marian, and a player on the tabor and pipe, the ages of the twelve, one with another, amounting to twelve hundred years.

Several remarkable instances of longevity are related by Humboldt among the Indians of South America. And though few Europeans exceed 84, yet the excess of 100 years in various instances is proved by our Parish Registers, and is recorded with probable correctness in the contemporary obituaries of our magazines. A Mr. Easton published a list of 1712 persons, who, in various parts of the world, had lived beyond 100, during a period of 1733 years, from A. D. 66 to A. D. 1799. The instance of greatest longevity in modern times of which the authenticity is generally allowed, is that of Jenkins, an Englishman, who lived to 169. The most remarkable man for his old age, is, perhaps, Parr, who lived to be 152 years and nine months, when his life is supposed to have been *curtailed*, in consequence of his being brought to London, by the Earl of Arundel, in order to be shewn to the King. His body was examined by the celebrated Harvey, the discoverer of the circulation of the blood. Harvey has left a particular account of the result ; there was no decay of any organ, his heart was “ great, thick, fibrous, and fat ;” his death was occasioned by plethora, which was very likely to have arisen from change of diet and habits of life. Parr married at 80, and had two children by his

wife. At 105 he did penance for his unlawful offspring at that age by one Catherine Milton. Taylor, the *Water-poet*, a contemporary, commemorates Parr's *white sheet*—

Which aged he one hundred and five year  
In Aldersbury Bury's church did wear.

We have an ancient poetical record, in Boughton church, of an Englishman whose life exceeded 100 years, and who appears to have been a giant, though he has not told us his height.

I now that lye within this marble stone,  
Was called Thomas Hawkins by my name,  
My time of life *an hundred years and one*,  
King Henry the eight I served, which won me fame.  
Who was to me a gracious Prince alwaies,  
And made me well to spend my aged dayes.  
*My stature high, my body huge and strong,*  
*Excelling all that lived in my age.*  
But, Nature spent, death would not tarry long,  
To fetch the pledge which life had laid to guage.  
My fatal day, if thou desirest to know,  
Behold the figures written here below.

15th March, 1587.

There was a Frenchman who lived to 115, that was very much noticed at the Courts of Louis XIV. and Louis XV., *Philip D'Herbelot*. He was nine years old at the death of Henry IV. He knelt before Louis XIV. After which the king raised him with his own hand; this was an incident that served a long time for the gossip of a frivolous and obsequious Court. The Rev. Peter Alley, Rector of Donamow, in Ireland, who died in 1763 aged 111, did his parish duty till within a few days of his death, and had thirty-three children. Not long ago, a poor man in London was allowed by the Mendicity Society to wear a badge denoting that he had exceeded 100



years. Cowper wrote an elegy upon a lady who died on her birth-day, at the age of 100.

These aged persons become particularly interesting in their latter years, when, in early life, they have taken a part in remarkable transactions which have become matters of history. Thus Richard Cromwell lived to the age of 86. He returned to England in 1680, where he resided till his death in 1712. He had occasion to appear in a Court of Justice in 1705, when he was treated with much respect, for which the Judge was commended by Queen Anne. One Richard Shoreditch, the last survivor of the jury who acquitted the seven Bishops, lived till 1735, after attaining the age of 90. Dr. Johnson was probably the last survivor of persons who had received the *Royal touch*.

With regard to the ages of *Antediluvians*—they are stated to have been as follows :—Adam 930, Seth 912, Enos 905, Cainan 910, Mahalaleel 895, Jared 962, Enoch 365, (supposed by some to be still living,) Methusaleh 969, Lamech 777, Noah 950, Sem 600. After the Flood, the oldest person, Arphaxad, was 438. Two other persons exceeded 400; the next age is 239. Then we have Abraham 175, Isaac 188, (he was 137 when his failure of sight was attended with such important consequences,) Jacob 147, Moses 120. We are told that, at this age, “his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated,” Joshua 110. It would appear that Adam did not know infancy, childhood, or boyhood, and as the antediluvian patriarchs do not appear to have had children till they were 60, if we add, this, or say 40 years, to Adam’s life, he would have had an older *body* than Methusaleh.

It is remarkable that the XCth Psalm is entitled “A prayer of Moses, the man of God.” The part of it relating to age



seems less appropriate to the time when Moses lived than to that of David who died at the age of 70, or, indeed, the present day. "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if, by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away." In the first book of Herodotus, the historian relates a curious dialogue between Solon and King Cræsus, which assumes for the life of man the identical period of the psalmist. Solon says, "I will suppose the *term of human life to extend to seventy years.*" After counting the number of days in that period, and observing that each day will be productive of some new incident, Solon declined to answer the question proposed to him, whether Cræsus was not entitled to be called the happiest person that had ever lived? until he had witnessed all the scenes of his life to the end of the last act.

According to Dr. South, the celebrated Court Preacher in the reign of Charles II., it is much to be regretted that we have none of Adam's literary remains. In the early ages of the Church, the world was supposed to be possessed of such a valuable curiosity. Several of the first Fathers speak familiarly of a publication by Enoch, from which, indeed, an actual quotation is given in the epistle of St. Jude. "Adam" (South assures us), "came into the world a philosopher; he could see consequents yet dormant in their principles, and effects yet unborn and in the womb of their causes. By rating positives, by their privatives, and other arts of reason by which discourse supplies the want of the reports of sense, we may collect the excellency of the understanding *then* by the glorious remainders of it now; and guess at the stateliness of the building by the magnificence of its ruins. And certainly that must have been very glorious, the decays of which are so admirable. He

that is comely when old and decrepid, surely was very beautiful when he was young. *An Aristotle was but the rubbish of an Adam*, and Athens but the rudiments of Paradise !”

It has been observed that the Painters do not give Adam a beard. This is the more remarkable, as the Mosaic law is so very particular on the subject of hair-cutting. “Thou shalt not mar the corners of thy beard ;” Lev. ch. xix. is a positive commandment on the subject. Probably it was conceived, that a beard would give Adam the appearance of being old. Milton, who allows him abundance of hair (a point of great delicacy in Milton’s day) omits the beard.

Two of far nobler shape, erect and tall,  
 Godlike erect ! with native honour clad  
 In naked majesty, seem’d Lords of all :  
 And worthy seem’d ; for in their looks divine  
 The image of their glorious Maker shone,  
 Truth, wisdom, sanctitude, severe and pure ;  
 Severe, but in true filial freedom plac’d,  
 Whence true authority in men : though both  
 Not equal, as their sex not equal seem’d :  
 For contemplation he, and valour form’d :  
 For softness she, and sweet attractive grace ;  
 He for God only ; she for God in him.  
 His fair large front, and eye sublime, declar’d  
 Absolute rule ; and *hyacinthine locks*,  
*Round from his parted forelock manly hung*  
*Clust’ring*, but not beneath his shoulders broad :  
 She as a veil, down to the slender waist  
 Her unadorned golden tresses wore,  
 Dishevel’d, but in wanton ringlets waved,  
 As the vine curls her tendrils.

Brown treats it as a vulgar error of his day, that Methuselah was the longest liver of the posterity of Adam ; whereas he was only the longest liver of the patriarchs whose age is expressed. He notices that the Scriptures only detail the

particulars of the line of Seth, and that the ages of the wives of patriarchs before Noah are not given. He considers the question what was Abel's age when murdered by Cain? Our pictures generally represent Abel as a youth. But it would seem from a comparison of dates in Genesis, that he was 129. We have not the particulars of the ages of the *Sons of God*, or of the *Giants* mentioned in the sixth chapter of Genesis. But it is remarkable that in this chapter God is related to have said, "My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years." This passage has been discussed by most of the Fathers of the Church. Augustin, Chrysostom and Jerome, adverting to the directions concerning the Ark in the same chapter, infer that Noah was given 120 years to build the ark, and to make the proper selection of animals according to sexes, and their purity or impurity. Other Fathers think that Noah took less time; seeing that he entered the Ark in his 600th year, as we are told in the seventh chapter, and that he was 500 years old when he begot his three sons, as appears from the fifth chapter, and that the order to build the Ark mentions his sons and their wives.

Addison, in two numbers of the *Spectator*, has detailed an antediluvian courtship; he has given a love-letter written in the 788th year of the creation, with the answer sent "in less than a twelvemonth." The lover was promised a more positive answer "in less than fifty years." Hilpa, the lady, was at this time 170; she had 50 children, having been married before at the age of 100, after a short courtship of 30 years, which commenced when she was "but a girl of threescore and ten." Addison exhibits some liveliness of imagination

in these papers, but the peculiarities of antediluvian courtship would probably have been more naturally depicted by Swift or Defoe.

Two old persons whose years are nowhere set down may here be mentioned. First, the *Old man of the Mountain*. He held possession of Mount Lebanon during the Crusades, and his subjects, the Assassins, committed many enormities both upon Christians and Saracens. Hence the name of Assassin, in the sense in which it is used in English, occurs in several European tongues. The *old man* is supposed to be merely an English corruption of *Imaum*, or oriental Prince; though he is called by old French writers *Le viel de la montagne*, and he is the subject of a German tale under that name. The other "old gentleman" is *Old Nick*. Nick is taken from Nicken, a malignant aquatic Demon in Scandinavian mythology. Butler was probably wilfully ignorant, when he wrote, what Warburton wishes to alter to "Though he gave aim to our old Nick—"

Nick Machiavel had ne'er a trick,  
Though he gave name to our *old Nick*,  
But was below the least of these  
That pass i' th' world for holiness.

The ancient philosophers have written a great deal of elaborate nonsense on the mystical virtues of numbers separately or in combination. Hence the fancies concerning the *grand climacteric*, which is 63, or the combination of all the secret influences of the number 7 with those of 9. It has so happened that many eminent persons have died at this age, as Aristotle, Erasmus, Luther, Melancthon. The idea of a *grand climacteric* is of ancient date. Augustus, in a letter to his nephew Caius, called upon him to celebrate his nativity,

for that he had now escaped the critical year of 63. The notion can scarcely be considered obsolete. In a translation of Cicero de *Senectute* (the first ancient classic ever translated in America) the translator (the celebrated Franklin) says, that it was undertaken for the gratification of a gentleman who was in his *grand climacteric*. The original was written in Cicero's climacterical year. In the Rambler will be found a paper on the *climacterics* of the mind.

There occurs, indeed, often an indisposition between the ages of fifty and seventy-five, which is attended with an extraordinary alteration in the expression of countenance that remains fixed and indelible after recovery. This has been called the *climacteric disease*; it is the subject of an Essay, by Sir H. Hallford, to be found in the Medical Transactions of the College of Physicians; and it is noticed, by Dr. Roget, in an Essay upon the Effects of Age. The climacteric disease is better characterised in men than in women.

It is curious to follow so great a man as Lord Bacon in some of his minute inquiries concerning medical receipts for *prolonging life*. With some mixture of weakness and credulity, which was almost universal in his day, his *medical remains* indicate his insatiable appetite for knowledge of every kind. One of his receipts is entitled "*Methusalem water*. Against all asperity and torrefaction of inward parts, and all adustion of the blood, and generally against the dryness of age." The ingredients are powder of crab shells, pearl powder, ginger, white poppy seed, nitre, ambergris, the inner pith of cucumbers, milk, rosemary, and claret wine in which melting gold has been quenched. He gives also another receipt, which he calls "*Grains of Youth*. Nitre four grains, ambergris three grains, orris-powder two grains, white-poppy



seed  $\frac{1}{4}$  grain, saffron  $\frac{1}{2}$  grain, orange-flower water and a little tragacanth. Make them into small grains four in number. To be taken at 4 o'clock, or going to bed." Another receipt is for a *preserving Ointment*. "Take of deer's suet one ounce, of myrrh six grains, of saffron five grains, of Canary wine of two years old a spoonful and a half, *spread it on the inside of your shirt*, and let it dry and then put it on."

Lord Bacon wrote a treatise on the means of preserving health and retarding old age. Roger Bacon also wrote one upon the "care of old age, and the preservation of youth." It contains a great deal about the effect of different *oils* upon old men. Cornaro's treatise has long been popular. It first directed attention to diet as a means of prolonging life and contains some interesting descriptions of the Author's country enjoyments in old age.

The human structure itself observes a regular and systematic course from the dawn of life to its meridian, and thence to its closing day, if no violent causes occur to accelerate, or cut short its career. Dr. Sims, after examining 237 brains of persons from one year old to above seventy, found that the average weight increases gradually from one to 20 after which the increase is less considerable; the maximum weight is generally found between 40 and 50. Napoleon's hatter stated that the Emperor's head increased in size to the age of 35. After 50 the weight decreases as it formerly increased. A considerable portion of the physical peculiarities that characterize the period of old age may be traced to the long continued operation of the diminution of the fluid portion in each organ of the body. The *Death of Nature* has been well described by one of our poets, Armstrong, who was also a Physician.

But the full ocean ebbs, there is a point  
 By nature fixed, where life must downward tend,  
 For still the beating tide consolidates  
 The stubborn vessels, more reluctant still  
 To the weak throbs of th' ill-supported heart.  
 This languishing, these strengthening, by degrees,  
 To hard unyielding unelastic bone,  
 Thro' tedious channels the congealing blood  
 Crawls lazily, and hardly wanders on.  
 It loiters still, and now it stirs no more.  
 This is the period few attain; *the Death*  
*Of Nature*; thus (so Heaven ordained it) life  
 Destroys itself, and, could these laws have changed,  
 Nestor might now the fates of Troy relate,  
 And Homer live immortal as his song.

With regard to the *comparative longevity of persons of different nations, or in different situations of life*, Sir W. Temple made some observations on the longevity of French and English *Kings*, in an Essay which he composed on the subjects of Health and Life. He remarks that "Philip de Comines states that no King of France had lived to threescore, from Charlemaine's time to that of Louis XI.; whereas, in England, from the Conquest to the end of Queen Elisabeth's reign (a much shorter period), there reigned five Kings and one Queen, whereof two lived sixty-five years, two sixty-eight, and two reached their seventieth year." Sir William Temple relates a conversation with Monsieur Pomponne, the French Ambassador at the Hague, upon the subject, who told him that he had never heard of a person in France who had arrived at the age of 100 years. From all which circumstances he concludes somewhat rashly that the climate of France made its inhabitants so lively as to "spend their lives too fast. Like blowing a fire too often makes it burn better, but last the less."

It will be found that the English *Poets* of eminence have not, in general, been long lived. Of those who died between 70 and 80 we find Chaucer (of whose age there is some doubt), Dryden, Dr. Johnson, and Armstrong. Of those who died between 60 and 70, Milton, Ben Jonson, Butler and Cowper. Of those who died between 50 and 60, Pope, Prior, Addison, Gray, Fletcher and Massinger. But Spenser, Shakspeare, Akenside, Thomson, Gay, Parnell, Otway and Cowley did not attain 50 though they exceeded 40. Burns died at 38. Young, who attained the age of 81, is the Methusalem in our ordinary list of poets. Some who have written a good play or two may have been older. For example, Southern, who wrote *Isabella*, lived to 82. Pope has commemorated the Table-cloth (with its Irish Harp) and bill of fare of the dinner given to Southern on his 81st birthday.

Ireland, mother of sweet singers,  
Presents her harp still to his fingers.  
The feast his towering genius marks.  
In yonder wild goose and the larks!  
The mushrooms shew his wit was sudden,  
And for his judgment, lo a pudden!  
Roast beef, tho' old, proclaims him stout;  
And grace, altho' a bard, devout.  
This day Tom's fair account has run,  
(Without a blot) to *eighty-one*.

The older English *Physicians* seem to have generally attained a mellow age, though none of them have approached the years of Hippocrates and Galen, who lived to 104. Linacre in the reign of Henry VIII., who founded the college of Physicians, lived to 64. Dr. Caius, in the time of Elisabeth, who founded Caius college, and whose epitaph,



*Fui Caius*, is in the college chapel, attained 63. Harvey, the discoverer of the circulation of the blood, 79. Browne, the author of the *Religio Medici*, 77. Sydenham 65. Radcliffe, the founder of the Radcliffe Library, 65. Cheselden, 64; his death being occasioned by drinking ale after eating hot buns. Mead, 81; he was at the head of his profession for nearly half a century. The dates of birth of Garth and Arbuthnot are not known; Garth died in 1718. Fourteen years before this, when Pope's Pastorals were written, he had attained high eminence both as a Physician and a Poet.

Accept, O Garth! the Muse's early lays,  
That adds this leaf of ivy to *thy bays*,  
Hear, what from love unpractised hearts endure,  
From love, the sole disease *thou cans't not cure*.

Arbuthnot died in 1734. He was known as an author in 1697: he lived to read many of Pope's exquisite compositions which that Poet declares he had never composed, but for Arbuthnot's medical skill.

Friend to my life! (which did not you prolong,  
The world had wanted many an idle song.)

And again,

The Muse but served to ease some friend, not wife,  
And help me through this long disease, my life.  
To second, Arbuthnot! thy art and care,  
And teach the being you preserved to bear.

The most distinguished English *Lawyers* have been long lived. Sir E. Coke attained the age of 84. Sir M. Hale 67. Lord Thurlow, 70. Lord Mansfield, 89. Lord Somers, 66. Selden, 70. Ben Jonson commences very classically a birthday ode on the occasion of Lord Bacon entering his sixtieth year, he had then been chancellor two years; he lived to be

66. The ode is addressed to the *Lar* or household god of his Lordship's mansion, whom the Poet finds busy in preparing for the celebration of some religious rite.

Hail, happy Genius of this ancient pile !  
 How comes it all things so about thee smile ?  
 The fire, the wine, the men ! and, in the midst,  
 Thou stand'st as if some mystery thou didst.  
 Pardon, I read it in thy face, the day  
 For whose returns, and many, all these pray ;  
 And so do I. This is the *sixtieth* year,  
 Since Bacon, and thy Lord, was born, and here.  
 Son to the grave wise keeper of the seal,  
 Fame and foundation of the English weal.  
 England's High Chancellor ; the destin'd heir  
 In his soft cradle to his father's chair,  
 Whose even thread the fates spin round and full,  
 Out of their choicest, and their whitest wool.  
 'Tis a brave cause of joy ; let it be known ;  
 For't were a narrow gladness kept thy own.  
 Give me a deep crown'd bowl, that I may sing  
 In raising him the wisdom of my king.

The Ladies of the Court of Charles II. did not lead lives calculated to favor longevity. But, in answer, it may be thought, that these Ladies, judging from Lely's pictures of them, were by no means *frail*, except in reputation. The Duchess of Portsmouth, from whom the Dukes of Richmond derive their honors, lived to 70. The Duchess of Cleveland, from whom the Dukes of Grafton have the like honorable descent, lived to 68. Miss Jennings, mother of the Duke of Fitzjames, lived to 82. Nell Gwynn, the foundress of the dukedom of St. Albans, died in 1691, the date of her birth is not known, but her name appears in several of the play-bills for 1663. The sons of George III. did not abstain from applying in their youth, " hot and rebellious liquors to their blood." But

the nation well knows that they have been a long lived family. The more eminent composers of music, and natural philosophers shew lists of long livers. Sir J. Reynolds died at 71. Philidor, the chess-player, at 60. Broughton, the boxer, at 85. Wilkes, who said that he "always lived two days in one," and who must have spent a very restless life, reached 71.

It may be thought that a literary Angler had, *cæteris paribus*, a good chance of surviving the less patient part of the community. Whether Wooton, Paley, Sir H. Davey, or Woolaston prolonged their days by fly-fishing can only be conjectured. Isaac Walton, who devoted a larger portion of his life to this amusement than, perhaps, any person of equal intellectual capacity, wrote his lives of Donne, Saunderson, and Hooker, at the age of 83. His will commences "I, I. W., being this present day in the ninetieth year of my age, and in perfect memory." This was in 1783. He edited in the same year Chalkill's poems, but died in the winter in consequence of the severity of what was long called, "The great frost." His poem called the Angler's Wish concludes thus; the Wish is very compatible with longevity, and appears to have been fulfilled.

There sit by him (his dog) and eat my meat,  
 There see the sun both rise and set.  
 There bid good-morrow to next day,  
 There meditate my time away.  
 And *angle on*, and beg to have  
 A *quiet* passage to the grave.

On the subject of longevity as affected by various occupations of life, great caution is requisite in forming conclusions. In the case of very noxious trades, indeed, satisfactory results may be easily arrived at—so, with regard to national

and local longevity, if our data are known to be correct, if disturbing circumstances are allowed for, and if our inductions are sufficiently large, (all which are in the power of ordinary industry) we may form conclusions of some accuracy and value. It is also easy to point out, in the habits incidental to every occupation, various circumstances which are calculated to impair or conduce to longevity. But to infer the duration of the natural lives of Kings in England and France from the longevity of particular reigning families, or the general duration of life in particular professions, from an induction, though it may be large, of those who have risen to the highest eminence in those professions, might lead to the deceptive conclusions. Erskine stated, in the House of Lords, that during the twenty-seven years he practised at the Bar, he was on no occasion prevented from attending to his business in Court by indisposition. He lived to seventy-three, but probably would have made an older physician, and a much older parson. In various occupations in which pre-eminent success may appear to depend chiefly on superior intellect, it will be found that physical strength of constitution, such as would promise a long life under most circumstances, is an almost indispensable companion. Where this is wanting, many fall a sacrifice to their own genius. The effects of extraordinary mental activity in wasting a body which has not sufficient stamina for accomplishing ambitious projects, are noticed in several descriptions of the first Lord Shaftsbury. Thus, it is said of him in the *Essay on Satire* written by Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham, but for which Dryden, as the supposed author, was violently assaulted.

As by our little Machiavel we find,  
That nimblest creature of the busy kind.

His limbs are crippled, and his body shakes,  
 Yet his hard mind which all this bustle makes,  
 No pity of its poor companion takes.

And in the Absalom and Architophel the following lines on Shaftsbury display Dryden's vigorous powers of composition ; they are the commencement of Architophel's character, and were published shortly before Shaftsbury was to be arraigned on a charge for high treason.

Of these the false Architophel was first ;  
 A name to all succeeding ages curst.  
 For close designs, and crooked counsels fit ;  
 Sagacious, bold, and turbulent of wit.  
 Restless, unfixed in principles and place,  
 In power unpleased, impatient of disgrace.  
*A fiery soul, which, working out its way,  
 Fretted the pigmy body to decay,  
 And o'er informed the tenement of clay.*  
 A daring pilot in extremity,  
 Pleased with the danger, when the waves went high,  
 He sought the storms ; but for a calm unfit,  
 Would steer too nigh the sands to boast his wit.  
 Great wits are sure to madness near allied,  
 And thin partitions do their bounds divide.  
 Else why should he, with wealth and honor blest,  
 Refuse his age the needful hours of rest ?  
*Punish a body which he could not please,  
 Bankrupt of life, yet prodigal of ease ?*

Brown represents as one of the vulgar errors of his time, the story of the *Wandering Jew*. His book on *Vulgar errors* does not relate to the errors of illiterate people, which could scarcely be contained in an Alexandrian library, but those of persons having some pretensions to intelligence and education ; errors of this kind, even in the present day, would fill a large folio. He notices that there is a long account of this supposed undying Jew in Mathew Paris's history, taken from



the relation given by an Armenian Bishop, who came to England in the reign of Henry III. and who said that he had often entertained the Jew at table ; that his name was Castaphilus, and he was keeper of the judgment-hall in the time of Pilate, and that upon hurrying Jesus Christ out of the hall, he was told that he should wait upon earth till Christ came back again. Calmet, in his Dictionary of the Bible, mentions a person at Hamburgh, and another in England, who pretended to be the Wandering Jew. The story seems to have been founded on John ch. xxi. v. 21, 22, 23, " Peter seeing him (John) saith to Jesus, Lord, what shall this man do ? Jesus saith unto him if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee ? Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die ; yet Jesus said not unto him he shall not die ; but, if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee ? " The notion of the Evangelist John being alive was very prevalent in the early centuries of the church. Hippolitus, a martyr, about 300 years after the death of Christ, asserts, that he had himself met and conversed with John.

The story of St. Leon by Godwin is taken from that of the Wandering Jew, or rather from an intermediate fiction to be found in an ingenious book called *Hermippus redivivus*, which ridicules the vaunted effects of the *universal medicine* for prolonging life.

" There happened in the year 1687, an odd accident at Venice, that made a very great stir then, and which I think deserves to be secured from oblivion. The great freedom and ease with which all persons, who make a good appearance, live in that city, is known sufficiently to all who are acquainted with it ; such will not therefore be surprised that a stranger

who went by the name of Signor Gualdi, and who made a considerable figure there, was admitted into the best company, though nobody knew who, or what he was. He remained at Venice some months, and three things were remarked in his conduct. The first was, that he had a small collection of fine pictures which he readily showed to any body that desired it; the next, that he was perfectly versed in all arts and sciences, and spoke on every subject with such readiness and sagacity, as astonished all who heard him; and it was, in the third place, observed, that he never wrote or received any letter; never desired any credit, or made use of bills of exchange, but paid for every thing in ready money, and lived decently, though not in splendor. This gentleman met one day at the coffee-house with a Venetian nobleman, who was an extraordinary good judge of pictures: he had heard of Signor Gualdi's collection, and in a very polite manner desired to see them, to which the other very readily consented. After the Venetian had viewed Signor Gualdi's collection and expressed his satisfaction, by telling him, that he had never seen a finer, considering the number of pieces of which it consisted; he cast his eyes by chance over the chamber-door, where hung a picture of this stranger. The Venetian looked upon it, and then upon him. This picture was drawn for you, Sir, says he, to Signor Gualdi; to which the other made no answer, but by a low bow. You look, continued the Venetian, like a man of fifty, and yet I know this picture to be of the hand of Titian, who has been dead one hundred and thirty years, how is this possible? It is not easy, said Signor Gualdi gravely, to know all things that are possible; but there is certainly no crime in my being like a picture drawn by Titian. The Venetian easily per-

ceived by this manner of speaking that he had given the stranger offence, and therefore took his leave. He could not forbear speaking of this in the evening to some of his friends, who resolved to satisfy themselves by looking upon the picture the next day. In order to have an opportunity of doing so they went to the coffee-house about the time that Signor Gualdi was wont to come thither, and not meeting with him, one of them, who had often conversed with him, went to his lodgings to enquire after him, where he heard, that he set out an hour before for Vienna. This affair made a great noise, and found a place in all the newspapers of that time."

With these fictions of interminable old men may be read the interesting story, as related by Gibbon, of the *Seven Sleepers*. This story has been presented to the world in various shapes, as, for example in an American novel, which was dramatised and acted in London under the name of the *Flying Dutchman*.

"Among the insipid legends of ecclesiastical history, I am tempted to distinguish the memorable fable of the Seven Sleepers; whose imaginary date corresponds with the reign of the younger Theodosius, and the conquest of Africa by the Vandals. When the Emperor Decius persecuted the Christians, seven noble youths of Ephesus concealed themselves in a spacious cavern in the side of an adjacent mountain; where they were doomed to perish by the tyrant, who gave orders that the entrance should be firmly secured with a pile of huge stones. They immediately fell into a deep slumber, which was miraculously prolonged, without injuring the powers of life, during a period of one hundred and eighty-seven years. At the end of that time the slaves of Adolius, to whom the inheritance of the mountain had descended, removed the stones, to supply materials for some rustic edifice.



The light of the sun darted into the cavern, and the seven sleepers were permitted to awake.

“After a slumber, as they thought, of a few hours, they were pressed by the calls of hunger ; and resolved that Jamblichus, one of their number, should secretly return to the city, to purchase bread for the use of his companions. The youth (if we may still employ that appellation) could no longer recognize the once familiar aspect of his native country ; and his surprise was increased by the appearance of a large cross, triumphantly erected over the principal gate of Ephesus. His singular dress, and obsolete language, confounded the baker, to whom he offered an ancient medal of Decius as the current coin of the empire ; and Jamblichus, on the suspicion of a secret treasure, was dragged before the judge. Their mutual inquiries produced the amazing discovery that two centuries were almost elapsed since Jamblichus and his friends had escaped from the rage of a Pagan tyrant. The Bishop of Ephesus, the clergy, the magistrates, the people, and, as it is said, the Emperor Theodosius himself, hastened to visit the cavern of the Seven Sleepers ; who bestowed their benediction, related their story, and at the same instant peaceably expired. The origin of this marvellous fable cannot be ascribed to the pious fraud and credulity of the modern Greeks, since the authentic tradition may be traced within half a century of the supposed miracle. James of Sarug, a Syrian bishop, who was born only two years after the death of the younger Theodosius, has devoted one of his two hundred and thirty homilies to the praise of the young men of Ephesus. Their legend, before the end of the sixth century, was translated from the Syriac into the Latin language, by the care of Gregory of Tours. The hostile communions of the East

preserve their memory with equal reverence ; and their names are honourably inscribed in the Roman, the Abyssinian, and the Russian calendar. Nor has their reputation been confined to the Christian world. This popular tale, which Mahomet might learn, when he drove his camels to the fairs of Syria, is introduced, as a divine revelation, into the Koran.

“ The story of Seven Sleepers has been adopted, and adorned, by the nations, from Bengal to Africa, who profess the Mahometan religion. And some vestiges of a similar tradition have been discovered in the remote extremities of Scandinavia. This easy and universal belief, so expressive of the sense of mankind, may be ascribed to the genuine merit of the fable itself. We imperceptibly advance from youth to age, without observing the gradual but incessant change of human affairs ; and even in our larger experience of history, the imagination is accustomed, by a perpetual series of causes and effects, to unite the most distant revolutions. But if the interval between two memorable eras could be instantly annihilated, if it were possible, after a momentary slumber of two hundred years, to display the new world to the eyes of a spectator who still retained a lively and recent impression of the old, his surprise and his reflections would furnish the pleasing subject of a philosophical romance. The scene could not be more advantageously placed, than in the two centuries which elapsed between the reigns of Decius and of Theodosius the younger. During this period, the seat of Government had been transported from Rome to a new city on the banks of the Thracian Bosphorus ; and the abuse of military spirit had been suppressed by an artificial system of tame and ceremonious servitude. The throne of the persecuting Decius was filled by a succession of Christian and orthodox

princes, who had extirpated the fabulous gods of antiquity : and the public devotion of the age was impatient to exalt the Saints and Martyrs of the Catholic Church, on the altars of Diana and Hercules. The union of the Roman empire was dissolved : its genius was humbled in the dust ; and armies of unknown barbarians, issuing from the frozen regions of the north, had established their victorious reign over the fairest provinces of Europe and Africa.”

Swift’s description of the *Strulbrugs* in the Island of Luggnag, may be here not inappositely introduced.

“ One day, in much good company, I was asked by a person of quality, ‘ whether I had seen any of their *Strulbrugs*, or immortals.’ ‘ I said, I had not,’ and desired he would explain to me what he meant by such an appellation, applied to a mortal creature. He told me ‘ that sometimes, though very rarely, a child happened to be born in a family, with a red circular spot in the forehead, directly over the left eyebrow, which was an infallible mark that it should never die. The spot, as he described it, was about the compass of a silver three-pence, but in the course of time grew larger, and changed its colour ; for at twelve years old it became green, so continued till five and twenty, then turned to a deep blue : at five and forty it grew coal black and as large as an English shilling, but never admitted any further alteration.’ He said, ‘ these births were so rare, that he did not believe there could be above eleven hundred *Strulbrugs*, of both sexes, in the whole kingdom ; of which he computed about fifty in the metropolis, and among the rest, a young girl born about three years ago : that these productions were not peculiar to any family, but a mere effect of chance ; and the children of

the Strulbrugs themselves were equally mortal with the rest of the people.

“I freely own myself to have been struck with inexpressible delight, upon hearing this account : and the person who gave it me happening to understand the Balnibarbian language, which I spoke very well, I could not forbear breaking out, into expressions perhaps a little too extravagant. I cried out, as in a rapture, ‘Happy nation, where every child has at least a chance for being immortal. Happy people, who enjoy so many living examples of ancient virtue, and have masters ready to instruct them in the wisdom of all former ages ! but happiest, beyond all comparison, are those excellent *Strulbrugs*, who being born exempt from that universal calamity of human nature, have their minds free and disengaged, without the weight and depression of spirits caused by the continual apprehensions of death.’ I discovered my admiration, that I had not observed any of these illustrious persons at court ; the black spot on the forehead being so remarkable a distinction, that I could not have easily overlooked it : and it was impossible that his majesty, a most judicious prince, should not provide himself with a good number of such wise and able counsellors. Yet perhaps the virtue of those reverend sages was too strict for the corrupt and libertine manners of a court : and we often find by experience that young men are too opinionated and volatile, to be guided by the sober dictates of their seniors. However since the king was pleased to allow me access to his royal person, I was resolved, upon the very first occasion, to deliver my opinion to him on this matter freely and at large, by the help of my interpreter ; and whether he would please to take my advice or not, yet in one thing I was determined, that his Majesty having frequent-

ly offered me an establishment in this country, I would, with great thankfulness, accept the favour, and pass my life here in the conversation of those superior beings the *Strulbrugs*, if they would please to admit me.

“The gentleman to whom I addressed my discourse, because (as I have already observed) he spoke the language of Balni-barbi, said to me, with a sort of a smile which usually arises from pity to the ignorant, “that he was glad of any occasion to keep me among them, and desired my permission to explain to the company what I had spoke.” He did so, and they talked together for some time in their own language, whereof I understood not a syllable, neither could I observe by their countenances, what impression my discourse had made on them. After a short silence, the same person told me, ‘that his friends and mine (so he thought fit to express himself) were very much pleased with the judicious remarks I had made on the great happiness and advantages of immortal life, and they were desirous to know, in particular manner, what scheme of living I should have formed to myself, if it had fallen to my lot to have been born a *Strulbrug*.

“I answered it was easy to be eloquent on so copious and delightful a subject especially to me, who had been often apt to amuse myself with visions of what I should do, if I were a king, a general or a great lord: and upon this very case, I had frequently run over the whole system how I should employ myself, and pass the time, if I were sure to live for ever.

“That if it had been my good fortune to come into the world as a *Strulbrug*, as soon as I could discover my own happiness, but understanding the difference between life and death, I would first resolve, by all arts and methods whatsoever, to procure myself riches: in the pursuit of which, by thrift and



management, I might reasonably expect, in about two hundred years, to be the wealthiest man in the kingdom. In the second place, I would, from my earliest youth, apply myself to the study of arts and sciences, by which I should arrive in time to excel all others in learning. Lastly, I would carefully record every action and event of consequence, that happened in the public, impartially draw the characters of the several successions of princes and great ministers of state, with my own observations on every point. I would exactly set down the several changes in customs, language, fashions of dress, diet, and diversions ; by all which acquirements, I should be a living treasure of knowledge and wisdom, and certainly become the oracle of the nation.

“ I would never marry after threescore, but live in a hospitable manner, yet still on the saving side. I would entertain myself in forming and directing the minds of hopeful young men, by convincing them, from my own remembrance, experience, and observation, fortified by numerous examples, of the usefulness of virtue in public and private life. But my choice and constant companions should be a set of my own immortal brotherhood ; among whom, I would elect a dozen from the most ancient, down to my own contemporaries. Where any of these wanted fortunes, I would provide them with convenient lodges round my own estate, and have some of them always at my table ; only mingling a few of the most valuable among you mortals, whom length of time would harden me to lose with little or no reluctance, and treat your posterity after the same manner ; just as a man diverts himself with the annual succession of pinks and tulips in his garden, without regretting the loss of those which withered the preceding year.

“ These *Strulbrugs* and I would mutually communicate our observations and memorials, through the course of time ; remark the several gradations by which corruption steals into the world, and oppose it in every step, by giving perpetual warning and instruction to mankind ; which, added to the strong influence of our own example, would probably prevent that continual degeneracy of human nature, so justly complained of in all ages.

“ Add to this, the pleasure of seeing the various revolutions of states and empires ; the changes in the lower and upper world ; ancient cities in ruins, and obscure villages become the seats of kings ; famous rivers lessening into shallow brooks ; the ocean leaving one coast dry, and overwhelming another ; the discovery of many countries yet unknown ; barbarity overrunning the politest nations, and the most barbarous become civilized. I should then see the discovery of the longitude, the perpetual motion, the universal medicine, and many other great inventions, brought to the utmost perfection.

“ What wonderful discoveries should we make in astronomy, by outliving and confirming our own predictions ; by observing the progress and returns of comets, with the changes of motion in the sun, moon, and stars.

“ I enlarged upon many other topics, which the natural desire of endless life, and sublunary happiness could easily furnish me with. When I had ended, and the sum of my discourse had been interpreted, as before, to the rest of the company, there was a good deal of talk among them in the language of the country, not without some laughter at my expense. At last the same gentleman who had been my interpreter, said, he was desired by the rest to set me right in a few mistakes, which I had fallen into through the common

imbecility of human nature, and upon that allowance was less answerable for them. That this breed of *Strulbrugs* was peculiar to their country, for there were no such people either in Balnibarbi or Japan, where he had the honour to be ambassador from his majesty, and found the natives in both these kingdoms very hard to believe that the fact was possible : and it appeared from my astonishment when he first mentioned the matter to me, that I received it as a thing wholly new, and scarcely to be credited. That in the two kingdoms above-mentioned, where during his residence he had conversed very much, he observed long life to be the universal desire and wish of mankind. That whoever had one foot in the grave was sure to hold back the other as strongly as he could. That the oldest had still hopes of living one day longer, and looked on death as the greatest evil, from which nature always prompted him to retreat. Only in this island of Luggnag the appetite for living was not so eager, from the continual example of the *Strulbrugs* before the eye.

“ That the system of living contrived by me was unreasonable and unjust ; because it supposed a perpetuity of youth, health, and vigour, which no man could be so foolish to hope, however extravagant he may be in his wishes. That the question therefore was not, whether a man would choose to be always in the prime of youth, attended with prosperity and health ; but how he would pass a perpetual life, under all the usual disadvantages which old age brings along with it ; for although few men will avow their desires of being immortal, upon such hard conditions, yet in the two kingdoms before mentioned, of Balnibarbi and Japan, he observed that every man desired to put off death some time longer, let it approach ever so late : and he rarely heard of any man who



died willingly, except he were incited by the extremity of grief or torture. And he appealed to me, whether in those countries I had travelled as well as my own I had not observed the same general disposition ?

“ After this preface, he gave me a particuilar account of the *Strulbrugs* among them. He said, they commonly acted like mortals till about thirty years old ; after which, by degrees, they grew melancholy and dejected, increasing in both till they came to fourscore. This he learned from their own confession : for otherwise, there not being above two or three of that species born in an age, they were too few to form a general observation by. When they came to fourscore years, which is reckoned the extremity of living in this country, they had not only all the follies and infirmities of other old men, but many more which arose from the dreadful prospect of never dying. They were not only opinionative, peevish, covetous, morose, vain, talkative ; but incapable of friendship, and dead to all natural affection, which never descended below their grandchildren. Envy, and impotent desires are their prevailing passions. But those objects against which their envy seems principally directed, are the vices of the younger sort, and the deaths of the old. By reflecting on the former, they find themselves cut off from all possibility of pleasure ; and whenever they see a funeral, they lament and repine that others are gone to a harbour of rest, to which they themselves can never hope to arrive. They have no remembrance of any thing, but what they learned and observed in their youth and middle age, and even that is very imperfect ; and for the truth or particulars of any fact, it is safer to depend on common tradition, than upon their best recollections. The least miserable among them appear to be those who turn to dotage, and

entirely lose their memories ; these meet with more pity and assistance, because they want many bad qualities which abound in others.

“ If a *Strulbrug* happen to marry one of his own kind, the marriage is dissolved of course, by the courtesy of the kingdom, as soon as the younger of the two comes to be fourscore, for the law thinks it a reasonable indulgence, that those who are condemned, without any fault of their own, to a perpetual continuance in the world, should not have their misery doubled by the load of a wife.

“ As soon as they have completed the term of eighty years, they are looked on as dead in law ; their heirs immediately succeed to their estates ; only a small pittance is reserved for their support, and the poor ones are maintained at the public charge. After that period, they are held incapable of any employment of trust or profit ; they cannot purchase lands, or take leases, neither are they allowed to be witnesses in any cause either civil or criminal, not even for the decision of meers and bounds.

“ At ninety they lose their teeth and hair ; they have at that age no distinction of taste, but eat and drink whatever they can get without relish or appetite. The diseases they were subject to still continue, without increasing or diminishing. In talking, they forget the common appellations of things, and the names of persons, even of those who are their nearest friends and relations. For the same reason, they never can amuse themselves with reading, because their memory will not serve to carry them from the beginning of a sentence to the end ; and by this defect, they are deprived of the only entertainment whereof they might otherwise be capable.

“ The language of this country being always upon the flux,

the Strulbrugs of one age do not understand those of another ; neither are they able, after two hundred years, to hold any conversation (farther than a few general words) with their neighbours the mortals ; and thus they lie under the disadvantage of living like foreigners in their own country.

“ This was the account giving me of the Strulbrugs, as near as I can remember. I afterwards saw five or six of different ages, the youngest not above two hundred years old, who were brought to me at several times by some of my friends ; but although they were told, that I was a great traveller, and had seen all the world, they had not the least curiosity to ask me a question ; only desired I would give them *shunskudash*, or a token of remembrance ; which is a modest way of begging, to avoid the law that strictly forbids it, because they are provided for by the public, although indeed with a very scanty allowance.

“ They are despised and hated by all sorts of people. When one of them is born, it is reckoned ominous, and their birth is recorded very particularly : so that you may know their age by consulting the register, which however, has not been kept above a thousand years past, or at least has been destroyed by time or public disturbances. But the usual way of computing how old they are, is by asking them what kings or great persons they can remember, and then consulting history ; for infallibly the last prince in their mind did not begin his reign after they were fourscore years old.

“ They were the most mortifying sight I ever beheld, and the women more horrible than the men. Besides the usual deformities in extreme old age, they acquired an additional ghastliness, in proportion to their number of years, which is not to be described ; and among half a dozen, I soon distin-

guished which was the eldest, although there was not above a century or two between them.

“ The reader will easily believe that from what I had heard and seen, my keen appetite to perpetuity of life was much abated. I grew heartily ashamed of the pleasing visions I had formed; and thought no tyrant could invent a death, into which I would not run with pleasure, from such a life. The king heard of all that passed between me and my friends upon this occasion, and rallied me very pleasantly; wishing I could send a couple of *Strulbrugs* to my own country, to arm our people against the fear of death, but this, it seems, is forbidden by the fundamental laws of the kingdom, or else I should have been well content with the trouble and expense of transporting them.

“ I could not but agree, that the laws of this kingdom relative to the *Strulbrugs* were founded upon the strongest reasons, and such as any other country would be under the necessity of enacting in the like circumstances. Otherwise, as avarice is the necessary consequence of old age, those immortals would in time become proprietors of the whole nation, and engross the civil power, which, for want of abilities to manage, must end in the ruin of the public.”

The germ of several of Swift's most witty pieces is to be found in Rabelais.—The *Strulbrugs* were probably suggested by the Island of *Macreons*, which is one of the several imaginary places that *Pantagruel* visits. There is also an old romance called *Perce-forest*, in which there is an *Isle of Life*, from which people must be taken before they can die.

Valerius Maximus relates one of the most remarkable instances in history of a person voluntarily resigning life at a very advanced age, not on account of bodily infirmities or any cala-



mity, but merely to avoid the anticipated evils of protracted existence. He relates, that going into Asia with Sextus Pompeius, and passing by the city of Julis, he was present at the death of a lady, aged about ninety. She had declared to her superiors the reason which induced her to quit the world; after this, she prepared to swallow down poison; and imagining that the presence of Pompey would do great honor to the ceremony, she most humbly besought him to come thither on that occasion. He granted her request, but exhorted her very eloquently, and with the utmost earnestness, to live. However, this was to no purpose; she thanked him for his kind wishes, and besought the gods to reward him, not so much those she was going to, as those she was quitting. "I have hitherto," said she, "experienced only the smiles of Fortune, and that by an ill-grounded fondness for life I may not run the hazard of seeing the goddess change her countenance towards me, I voluntarily quit the light, while yet I take pleasure in beholding it, leaving behind me two daughters, and seven grandsons to respect my memory." She then turned about to her family, and exhorted them to live in peace and unity, and having recommended the care of her household, and the worship of her domestic deities, to her elder daughter, she, with a steady hand, took the glass that was filled with poison. As she held it, she addressed a prayer to Mercury, and having besought him to facilitate her passage to the better part of the receptacle of departed spirits, she with wonderful alacrity drank off the deadly draught. When this was done, with the same composure and steadiness of mind she signified in what manner the poison wrought; how the lower parts of her body became cold and senseless by degrees. As soon as the noble parts began to feel the infection, she

called her daughters to do the last office, by closing her eyes. "As for us," says Valerius, "who were almost stupified at the sight of so strange a spectacle, she dismissed us with weeping eyes. For Romans think compassion in no way incompatible with fortitude."

With this suicide may be compared one of the most remarkable in antiquity, that of Cleombrotus, who destroyed himself, after reading Plato, in order to enjoy immortal life as described by that philosopher. Callimachus' verses on the subject are thus translated by Mr. Merevale—

"O Sun, farewell!" from the tall rampart's height  
Cleombrotus exclaiming, plunged to night!  
Nor wasting care, nor fortune's adverse strife  
Chill'd his young hopes with weariness of life;  
But Plato's god-like page had fixed his eye,  
And made him long for immortality."

There is among birds something analogous to the Wandering Jew among men. It was a tradition among the Rabbis that the *Phoenix* was the only bird that did not follow Eve's example in eating of the forbidden fruit; and that it received immortality as its reward. Much has been written in connection with the subject of the phoenix on Job ch. xxix. v. 8. "Then I said, I shall die in my nest, and I shall multiply my days as the sand." Herodotus, the writer of the Talmud, Tacitus, Pliny, several of the Fathers, and many other authors make mention of the phoenix; Jacob Bryant has some curious observations, which connect themselves with the story of the immortal bird, in treating of the origin of the Phœnicians, and on the Greek term phoenix, when used for a palm tree, and on the mystical virtues ascribed in the scriptures and other places to the branches of that tree, which was believed to have perpetual renewal. The phoenix is found in the re-



verses of medals of Antoninus Pius, and of Constantine, it has, in those medals, a circle of rays round its head, to distinguish it as being the offspring of the sun.—This bird is celebrated by the poets Hesiod, Claudian, Ausonius and Ovid. The passage in Ovid will enable us, by means of Dryden's translation, to explain the bird's story more fully; we recognise in the passage "the long resounding pace" of Dryden's "Ætherial Coursers," but occasionally, though not in so striking a manner as in parts of his translation from Virgil, he indulges in what, in the *Art of Sinking*, is called the *alamode* style. Perhaps a few defects of rhythm will be detected which could never be found in lines of Pope.

—From himself the Phoenix only springs :  
 Self-born, begotten by the parent flame,  
 In which he burn'd, another and the same,  
 Who, not by corn, or herbs his life sustains,  
 But the sweet essence of Amomum drains :  
 And watches the rich gums Arabia bears,  
 While yet in tender dew they drop their tears.  
 He (his five centuries of life fulfill'd)  
 His nest on oaken boughs begins to build,  
 Or trembling tops of palm, and first he draws  
 The plan with his broad bill and crooked claws,  
 Nature's artificers ; on this the pile  
 Is form'd, and rises round ; then with the spoil  
 Of cassia, cinnamon, and stems of nard,  
 (For softness strew'd beneath) his fun'ral bed is rear'd :  
 Funeral and bridal both ; and all around  
 The borders with corruptless myrrh are crown'd.  
 On this incumbent ; till ethereal flame  
 First catches, then consumes the costly frame,  
 Consumes him too, as on the pile he lies :  
 He liv'd on odours, and in odours dies.  
 An infant Phoenix from the former springs,  
 His father's heir, and from his tender wings  
 Shakes off his parent dust, his method he pursues,

And the same lease of life on the same terms renews.  
 When grown to manhood he begins his reign,  
 And with stiff pinions can his flight sustain,  
 He lightens of its load the tree, that bore  
 His father's royal sepulchre before,  
 And his own cradle: this (with pious care,  
 Plac'd on his back) he cuts the buxom air,  
 Seeks the sun's city, and his sacred church,  
 And decently lays down his burthen in the porch.

Hesiod has some lines on the comparative duration of the lives of man and of animals. Addison, who furnishes the translation, observes that the description runs on like a multiplication table, and requires a good arithmetician to understand it.

The utmost age to man the Gods assign  
 Are winters three times two, and ten times nine;  
 Poor man nine times the prating daws exceed.  
 Three times the daws the deer's more lasting breed.  
 The deer's full thrice the ravens' race outrun,  
 Nine times the raven Titan's feathered son. (Phoenix.)  
 Beyond this age, with youth and beauty crown'd,  
 The Hamydryads shine ten ages round,  
 Their breath the longest is the fates bestow,  
 And such the bounds to mortal lives below.

Archbishop Laud placed two tortoises, one in the gardens of Lambeth palace, and the other in those of Fulham palace. It does not appear what their ages were before they took up their Arch-Episcopal residences. The Fulham tortoise we are acquainted with from the year 1628, it died in 1753. The Lambeth tortoise's history begins in 1633; it died in 1753, in consequence of the gardener digging it out of the ground during the winter for a trifling wager. The Clive, the Peterborough, and other tortoises have been noticed for their longevity.

There is an account of an elephant which Alexander the Great captured in India, and which he named Ajax, and dedi-

cated to the sun ; and of a stag round whose neck he placed a collar with an inscription ; these animals are said to have lived more than a century. *Cervina Senectas*, stag-like old age, is the expression which Juvenal puts into the mouths of the Roman youths, among whom the poisoning of old parents had become a jocular vice. It has been related that a carp was caught in a fish-pond in Suabia, with a copper ring in its ear having this inscription—" I am the first fish that was put into this pond by the hands of Frederick II., the 5th of October, 1230." The fish was alive in 1497. There are several statements concerning old carps in Buffon ; a carp was kept in the basin at Emanuel College, Cambridge, for 36 years ; it was blind in one eye, but knew its feeder.

Pompey, the lion, lived to 70. A horse has been known to live to the age of 62, but averages 25 to 30 years. Camels sometimes attain 100. Wolves 20. Foxes 14 to 16. The Rhinoceros 20. Sheep seldom exceed 10 years. Cows live about 15. Cats about 15. Squirrels, hares, rabbits average 7 or 8 years ; one of Cowper's hares, of which he has left us interesting memorials in verse and prose, in English and Latin, died of mere old age, when eleven years eleven months old ; this was the tamest of the three he kept and nursed. Spiders have been known to live for 13 years. The London *industrious fleas* are worn out in 2 years. The Romans kept tame lampreys, some of these are reported to have lived for three-score years ; the tears which their owners are said to have shed on losing them gave rise to several sallies of Roman wit. The dolphin and porpoise attain thirty. Cuvier considers it probable that whales sometimes live a thousand years. Swans have been said to live 300 years. Sky-

larks in a cage have been known to live 24 years. Pigeons live from 20 to 22 years. Linnets and goldfinches from 15 to 23. There are accounts by writers of credit of geese living to the age of 80 or 100. Pelicans have been known to attain 40 or 50 and 80 years. Ravens frequently attain 100. An eagle died at Vienna at the age of 104 years. The age of the eagle is adverted to by the Psalmist—"His youth shall be renewed like the eagle's." The passage has puzzled many of the ancient Fathers of the Church, who judged it expedient to support the passage just quoted, by some pious fictions as to the modes in which the eagle renewed itself. No less than four of the Fathers agree, that when the bird begins to feel advancing age from the weight of its feathers, and the dimness of its eyes, it betakes itself to a fountain of water, and plunging therein has its whole frame renovated. One Father adds, that the eagle before immersion has the knack of placing itself in the sun's rays in such a way that its old feathers are burnt.

It may be observed that much caution is necessary in crediting the facts which have been stated on the subject of the lives of animals. A love of the marvellous has evidently obscured the investigation in some instances; and many facts may have been stated upon unsifted hearsay testimony, or upon a very limited induction of particulars, and without regard to accidental circumstances. It is necessary also to consider that we have few means of arriving at satisfactory conclusions concerning animals in their wild state.

Of the age of the dog we have poetical notices. Homer informs us that Ulysses's dog, *Argus*, recognized him after an absence of twenty years. Somerville, in his poem of the Chace, says—

Short is their span ; few at the date arrive  
 Of ancient Argus, in old Homer's song  
 So highly honored, kind, sagacious brute !  
 Not e'en Minerva's wisdom could conceal  
 Thy much lov'd master from thy nicer sense.  
 Dying, his lord he own'd, view'd him all o'er  
 With eager eyes, then closed those eyes well pleased.

With regard to the Hamydryades, whose lives depended on the lives of trees, (whereas the Dryads were immortal,) the subject, though of much interest, would lead us further than would be convenient in the present work. It would introduce us to the history of traditionary English trees, some of which are now standing, others have fallen within recent memory, and some are preserved, like Drake's ship, in the form of chairs, boxes and other devices. A very old oak, and the largest of which mention is made in England, grew in Dorsetshire. Its circumference was sixty-eight feet. It had a cavity of sixteen feet long and twenty feet high, which was used, in the time of the Commonwealth, for an alehouse. It was shattered by a great storm, and in 1755 the last vestiges of it were sold for firewood. Evelyn mentions, in his *Sylva*, that in the New Forest, he counted, in the sections of some trees, three or four hundred concentric rings or layers, each of which, he considers, indicate a year's growth. And Gilpin, in his *Forest Scenery*, speaks of living trees that "chronicle upon their furrowed trunks ages before the Conquest." As an inquiry into the authenticity and history of our traditional trees, would detain us too long, I will merely enumerate the principal. *Alfred's* oak at Oxford. *Rufus's* oak in the New Forest. *Wallace's* oak in Shropshire. *Chaucer's* oak. The *Parliament*, *Fairlop* and *Yardley* oaks. The *Spencer's* oak and famed trees at *Penshurst*. The *Boxobell* oak in which Charles II.



was concealed. *King Stephen's* Chesnut tree. *Shakspeare's* and *Milton's* mulberry trees. *Newton's* apple tree. *Pope's* willow.

The subject may be concluded by an anecdote of Benserade, a star of the literary constellations in France which illumed the court of Louis XIV. La Bruyere, who describes his extraordinary vivacity at seventy, asks what he must have been in his younger days when, if he said any thing, a number of the court Ladies would exclaim "cela est delicieux, qu'a-t-il dit?" But Benserade did not know the point in classical mythology which we have just been noticing. So, on one occasion when *Madame* asked him "What was the difference between a *Dryad* and a *Hamydryad*?" he was at his wit's end. But he was ashamed to confess ignorance on such a point, and in such presence—so, observing that on either side of *Madame's* chair were papillioning (to anglicise a phrase of a modern French novelist) an Archbishop and a Bishop, Benserade answered—"The same kind of difference that prevails between Bishops and Archbishops." It was afterwards a standing joke at the Court of Louis XIV. that this or that Bishop was seeking to be made a *Hamydryad*.

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## SECTION II.

*The Duration of Beauty.*

ONE of the most painful incidents of humanity is the short duration of female beauty. Sometimes a cloud gathers over it in early life ; and even where this is not the case, it is generally the first of the gifts of nature which deserts its owner. —Lord Byron has sketched the two-fold fate of beauty in his description of the Tomb of Cecilia Metella, at Rome.

There is a stern round tower of other days,  
Firm as a fortress, with its fence of stone,  
Such as an army's baffled strength delays,  
Standing with half its battlements alone,  
And with two thousand years of ivy grown,  
The garland of eternity, where wave  
The green leaves over all by time o'erthrown,  
What was this tower of strength ? within its cave  
What treasure lay so locked, so hid ?—A woman's grave.

Perchance she died in youth ; it may be, bow'd  
With woes far heavier than the ponderous tomb  
That weighed upon her gentle dust, a cloud  
Might gather o'er her beauty, and a gloom  
In her dark eye, prophetic of the doom  
Heaven gives its favorites—early death ; yet shed  
A sunset charm around her, and illume  
With hectic light, the Hesperus of the dead,  
Of her consuming cheek the autumnal leaf-like red.

Perchance she died in age—surviving all,  
Charms, kindred, children—with the silver grey  
On her long tresses, which might yet recall  
It may be still a something of the day

When they were braided, and her proud array  
 And lovely form were envied, praised, and eyed  
 By Rome—but whither would conjecture stray?  
 Thus much alone we know,—Metella died,  
 The wealthiest Roman's wife. Behold his love or pride!

It is curious to see the different ways in which Poets have treated the analogy between the life of the *Rose* and that of Beauty. It requires a masterly hand to impart interest to what has now become such a hackneyed comparison. The following specimens are of no ordinary merit. The first is from Spenser's description of the *Bower of Bliss*.

The whiles some one did chaunt this lovely lay,  
 " Ah! see, whoso fair thing doth fain to see,  
 In springing floure the image of thy day.  
 Ah, see the virgin rose, how sweetly shee  
 Doth first peepe forth in bashful modestee,  
 That fairer seems the less ye see her may!  
 Lo! see soon after, how more bold and free,  
 Her bared bosom shee doth broad display,  
 Lo! see soon after how she fades and falls away!

" So passeth in the passing of a day,  
 Of mortal life the leafe, the bud, the floure,  
 No more doth flourish after first decay,  
 That erst was sought to deck both bed and bower  
 Of many a lady, and many a paramoure!  
 Gather, therefore, the rose whilest yet is prime,  
 For soon comes *Age* that will her pride defloure,  
 Gather the rose of love whiles yet is time,  
 Whilest loving thou mayest loved be with equal crime."

A like image is used by Jeremy Taylor—

" So have I seen a rose newly springing from the clefts of its hood, and, at first, it was fair as the morning, and full with the dew of heaven, as a lamb's fleece. But when a ruder breath had forced open its virgin-modesty, and dismantled

its too youthful and unripe retirements, it began to put on darkness ; and to decline to softness, and the symptoms of sickly age ; it bowed the head, and broke its stalk, and, at night, having lost some of its leaves, and all its beauty, it fell into the portion of weeds."

Waller's *Rose* is one of the most charming amatory compositions in our Poetry.

Go, lovely Rose !  
Tell her that wastes her time and me,  
That now she knows,  
When I resemble her to thee ;  
How sweet, and fair she seems to be.

Tell her that's young,  
And shuns to have her graces spy'd,  
That had'st thou sprung  
In deserts where no men abide,  
Thou must have uncommended died,

Small is the worth  
Of Beauty from the light retired ;  
Bid her come forth,  
Suffer herself to be desired,  
And not blush so to be admired.

Then die ! that she  
The common fate of all things rare  
May read in thee.  
How small a part of time they share,  
That are so wondrous sweet and fair !

A lady having lent Waller's poems to Kirke White, when he returned them, she discovered this additional stanza written at the bottom of the foregoing verses,

Yet, though thou fade,  
From thy dead leaves let fragrance rise ;  
And teach the maid  
That goodness time's rude hand defies,  
That virtue lives when beauty dies.

Prior's "Garland" is written in the same cast of thought as Waller's Rose—

The pride of every grove I chose,  
The violet sweet and lily fair,  
The dappled pink, and blushing rose,  
To deck my charming Cloe's hair.

At morn the nymph vouchsafed to place  
Upon her brow the various wreath,  
The flowers less blooming than her face,  
The scent less fragrant than her breath.

The flowers she wore along the day,  
And every nymph and shepherd said,  
That in her hair they looked more gay  
Than glowing in their native bed.

Undrest at evening, when she found,  
Their odours lost, their colors past,  
She changed her look, and on the ground  
Her garland and her eye she cast.

That eye dropt sense distinct and clear,  
As any Muse's tongue could speak,  
When from its lid a pearly tear  
Ran trickling down her beauteous cheek.

Dissembling what I knew too well,  
"My love, my life," said I, "explain  
"This change of humour, prythee, tell  
"That falling tear what does it mean?"

She sighed, she smiled, and to the flowers  
Pointing, the lovely moralist said—  
"See, friend, in some few fleeting hours,  
"See, yonder, what a change is made!

"Ah! me, the blooming pride of May  
"And that of beauty are but one;  
"At morn both flourish bright and gay;  
"Both fade at evening, pale and gone."

At dawn poor Stella danced and sung ;  
 The amorous youth around her bowed ;  
 At night her fatal knell was rung,  
 I saw, and kissed her in her shroud.

Such as she is who died to-day,  
 Such I, alas ! may be to-morrow ;  
 Go, Damon, bid thy muse display  
 The justice of thy Cloe's sorrow.

Socrates called Beauty a "short-lived tyranny." On the stage of the world, tyrants of this kind commonly descend from their thrones in a dignified manner, and by gradual steps—occasionally, however, their fall is sudden, though they are only deposed, and long survive it—an example of the latter description is presented in two numbers of the Rambler—I have put together some of the paragraphs, though they are not consecutive.

REL.  
12. 5. "I was born a *Beauty*. From the dawn of reason I had my regard turned wholly upon myself, nor can recollect any thing earlier than praise and admiration. My mother, whose face had luckily advanced her to a condition above her birth, thought no evil so great as deformity. She had not the power of imagining any other defect than a cloudy complexion, or disproportionate features ; and therefore contemplated me as an assemblage of all that could raise envy or desire, and predicted with triumphant fondness the extent of my conquests, and the number of my slaves. My mother, who pleased herself with the hopes of seeing my exaltation, dressed me with all the exuberance of finery ; and when I represented to her that a fortune might be expected proportionate to my appearance, told me that she should scorn the *reptile* who could inquire after the fortune of a girl like me. She advised me to prose-

cute my victories, and time would certainly bring me a captive who might deserve the honour of being enchained for ever.

I had now almost completed my nineteenth year : if my charms had lost any of their softness, it was more than compensated by additional dignity ; and if the attractions of innocence were impaired, their place was supplied by the arts of allurements. I was therefore preparing for a new attack, without any abatement of my confidence, when, in the midst of my hopes and schemes, I was seized by that dreadful malady which has so often put a sudden end to the *tyranny* of beauty. My mother often wandered over my face, as travellers over the ruins of a celebrated city, to note every place which had once been remarkable for a happy feature. She condescended to visit my retirement, but always left me more melancholy, for after a thousand trifling inquiries about my diet, and a minute examination of my looks, she generally concluded with a sigh, that I should never more be fit to be seen. I was not wholly without hope, that dejection had misrepresented me to myself, and that the remains of my former face might yet have some attraction and influence, but the first circle of visits convinced me, that my reign was at an end, that life and death were no longer in my hands ; that I was no more to practise the glance of command, or the frown of prohibition ; to receive the tribute of sighs and praises, or be soothed with the gentle murmurs of amorous timidity. My opinion was now unheard, and my proposals were unregarded ; the narrowness of my knowledge, and the meanness of my sentiments, were easily discovered, when the eyes were no longer engaged against the judgment ; and it was observed, by those who had formerly been charmed with my



vivacious loquacity, my understanding was impaired as well as my face, and that I was no longer qualified to fill a place in any company but a party at cards. Though the negligence of the men was not very pleasing when compared with vows and adoration, yet it was far more supportable than the insolence of my own sex. For the first ten months after my return into the world, I never entered a single house in which the memory of my downfall was not revived. At one place I was congratulated on my escape with life; at another I heard of the benefits of early inoculation; by some I have been told in express terms, that I am not yet without my charms; others have whispered at my entrance, This is the celebrated beauty. One told me of a wash that would smooth the skin; and another offered me her chair that I might not front the light. Some soothed me with the observation that none can tell how soon my case may be her own, and some thought it proper to receive me with mournful tenderness, formal condolence, and consolatory blandishments." The *insolence* of the lady's own sex must have been particularly aggravating. At the French Court, the Duc de Roquelaure was entreated to reconcile two of the Maids of Honor who were vehemently exasperated against each other. He said, Before I think of undertaking such a weighty affair, I must know one particular;—has either of the ladies called the other ugly? No. Then, replied the Duke, I will engage to make them as good friends as ever. Dr. Johnson's correspondent, Victoria, at last, confesses her uneasiness to Euphemia, "the only friend who had never pained her with comfort or with pity," and who surprizes her with an entirely new view of human existence, assuring her that there "are

other charms than those of beauty, and other joys than the praise of fools."

Besides the sudden and entire loss of beauty by such a cruel disease as the small-pox, our belles are subject to partial or temporary disfigurements from a variety of causes. One of these accidents, from its having occasioned an unrivalled poem in its own species, deserves our particular notice. Lord Petre had cut off a favorite lock of Miss Arabella Fermor's hair. This piece of gallantry occasioned an interruption of friendship between two families, whom Pope's poem of the *Rape of the Lock* was the means of re-uniting. We are told that "in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty;" this is proved by the fact that when he polled his head at every year's end, the hair weighed 200 shekels. In the days of Charles I. there was a particular lock of hair called a "heart-breaker;" it is mentioned in *Hudibras*. The coins of Charles I. are remarkable for the King's hair; and Prynne, from a feeling of the sins committed through the charms of female hair, wrote his celebrated treatise on the *Unloveliness of Lovelocks*. A few extracts from the *Rape of the Lock* will illustrate our subject, and show the fancy, delicate satire, and exquisite versification of the author. It may be observed that the sylphs were not originally a part of the poem, and that the idea of them is taken from a little French book called *Le Comte de Gabalis* composed by the Abbé Villars.

This Nymph to the destruction of mankind  
Nourished two *locks*, which graceful hung behind,  
In equal curls, and well conspired to deck,  
With shining ringlets the smooth iv'ry neck.

This day black omens threat the brightest fair  
That e'er deserved a watchful spirit's care;

Some dire disaster or by force or slight ;  
 But what, or where, the fates have wrapt in night.  
 Whether the Nymph shall break Diana's law,  
 Or some frail China jar receive a flaw ;  
 Or stain her honor, or her new brocade ;  
 Forget her prayers, or miss a masquerade ;  
 Or lose her heart, or necklace, at a ball ;  
 Or whether Heaven has doomed that shock must fall.  
 Haste then, ye spirits, to your charge repair :  
 The fluttering fan be Zephyretta's care.  
 The drops to thee, Brillante, we consign ;  
 And, Momentilla, let the watch be thine.  
 Do thou, Crispissa, tend her *fuv'rite lock*.  
 Ariel himself shall be the guard of shock.  
 To fifty chosen nymphs of special note  
 We trust th'important charge, the Petticoat.  
 Oft have we known that seven-fold fence to fail,  
 Though stiff with hoops, and armed with ribs of whale.

Whatever spirit, careless of his charge,  
 His post neglects, or leaves the Fair at large,  
 Shall feel sharp vengeance overtake his sins,  
 Be stopped in vials, or transfixed with pins ;  
 Or plunged in lakes of bitter washes lie,  
 Or wedged whole ages in a bodkin's eye.  
 Gums and pomatums shall his flight restrain,  
 While dogged he beats his silken wings in vain,  
 Or alum styptics with contracting pow'r  
 Shrink his thin essence like a shrivell'd flower.  
 Or as Ixion fixed, the wretch shall feel  
 The giddy motion of the whirling mill ;  
 In fumes of burning chocolate shall glow  
 And tremble at the sea that froths below !

And lo ! the board with cups and spoons is crowned,  
 The berries crackle, and the mill turns round :  
 On shining altars of Japan they raise  
 The silver lamp ; the fiery spirits blaze.  
 From silver spouts the grateful liquors glide,  
 While China's earth receives the smoking tide.  
 Straight hover round the fair her airy band.  
 Some, as she sipped, the fuming liquor fann'd ;

Some o'er her lap their careful plumes display'd,  
Trembling, and conscious of the rich brocade.

Just then Clarissa drew, with tempting grace,  
A two-edged weapon from her shining case.  
So ladies in Romance assist their knight,  
Present the spear, and arm him for the fight.  
He takes the gift with reverence, and extends  
The little engine on his fingers' ends.  
This just behind Belinda's neck he spread,  
As o'er the fragrant steam she bends her head.  
Swift to the *Lock* a thousand sprites repair,  
A thousand wings by turns blow back the hair;  
And thrice they twitched the diamond in her ear,  
Thrice she look'd back, and thrice the foe drew near.  
Just at that instant anxious Ariel sought  
The close recesses of the virgin's thought.  
As on the nosegay in her breast reclined,  
He watch'd th'ideas rising in her mind.  
Sudden he viewed, in spite of all her art,  
An earthly lover lurking at her heart.  
Amazed, confus'd, he found his power expired;  
Resigned to fate, and with a sigh retired.  
The peer now spreads the glittering forfex wide,  
T'inclose the *Lock*; now joins it to divide.  
Ev'n then before the fatal engine clos'd,  
A wretched sylph too fondly interposed,  
Fate urged the sheers, and cut the sylph in twain,  
But airy substance soon unites again.  
The meeting points the sacred hair dissever  
From the fair head for ever, and for ever!

But generally the decline of beauty is gradual; there is even a period of life to be passed over, during which beauty holds a doubtful and disputed reign; no one venturing to dethrone her, yet all thinking that her crown is in danger of falling off her head. Hence the *uncertainty* noticed by Lord Byron of what is called a *certain age*.

She was not old, nor young, nor at the years  
Which certain people call the "*certain age*,"

Which yet the most uncertain age appears,  
 Because I never heard, nor could engage  
 A person yet by prayers, or bribes, or tears,  
 To name, define by speech, or write on page,  
 The period meant precisely by that word—  
 Which surely is exceedingly absurd.

Laura was blooming still, had made the best  
 Of time, and time return'd the compliment,  
 And treated her genteely, so that, *dress'd*,  
 She look'd extremely well where'er she went.

Marmontel appears to be describing the *certain age*, when he says of a lady, “*Selianne, dans sa jeunesse avoit été jolie et belle ; elle etoit belle encore ; mais elle commençoit à n’être plus jolie.*” It must be expected that beauty, in its zodiacal course, after transfixing mankind with the arrows of the *Archer*, will loiter awhile through the sign of the *Balance*, and end by imitating the retrograde crawling, and sometimes other characteristics, of the *Crab*.

It may naturally be supposed that beautiful ladies must contemplate the loss or imputed loss of their charms with regret. There is a pretty Greek epigram upon this subject ; it represents the celebrated *Lais* as dedicating her looking-glass to *Venus*. The translation is by *Prior*, one of the most felicitous of our poets in light compositions.

Venus ! take my votive glass !  
 Since I am not what I was.  
 What from this day I shall be,  
 Venus, let me never see !

Some ladies have, perhaps, been too severely assailed by poetical ridicule, on account of the attempts they have made to conceal the effects of age. Thus *Prior*, in his airy style,

How old may *Phyllis* be ? you ask,  
 Whose beauty thus all hearts engages,



To answer is no easy task ;  
 For she has really two ages.

Stiff in brocade, and pinched in stays,  
 Her patches, paint, and jewels on,  
 All day let envy view her face,  
 And Phyllis is but twenty-one.

Paint, patches, jewels laid aside,  
 At night astronomers agree,  
 The evening has the day belied,  
 And Phyllis is some forty-three.

Pictures of old coquettes are very frequent in our poetry ; the following is from Young's *Satires*—It is overdone, but has spirit and point. Some of the ideas are borrowed from La Bruyere—

Autumnal Lyce carries in her face  
*Memento mori* to each public place,  
 O how your beating breast a mistress warms,  
 Who looks thro' spectacles to see your charms !  
 While rival undertakers hover round,  
 And with his spade the sexton marks the ground.  
 Intent not on her own but other's doom,  
 She plans new conquests, and defrauds the tomb.  
 In vain the cock has summoned sprites away,  
 She walks at noon, and blasts the bloom of day.  
 Gay rainbow silks her mellow charms enfold,  
 And nought of Lyce but herself is old.  
 Her grizzled locks assume a smirking grace,  
 And art has levell'd her deep-furrow'd face.  
 Her strange demand no mortal can approve,  
 We'll ask her blessing, but can't ask her love.  
 She grants, indeed, a lady may decline  
 (All ladies but herself) at ninety-nine.

Pope in his *Characters of Women* (a poem which seems designed chiefly as an attack upon Atossa and Cloe), does not



touch upon, or, at least, develop the foible of the sex which we are now considering. But in his epistle on the *Ruling Passion*, he appears to have hit, and that rather hard, the weakness of clinging to beauty under false colors. It is in his description of the dying coquette, which has been supposed to have been intended for Mrs. Oldfield, the Actress ; she was laid in state with her face exposed for two days.

Odious ! in woollen ! 't would a saint provoke,  
(Were the last words that poor Narcissa spoke.)  
No, let a charming chintz and Brussels lace  
Wrap my cold limbs, and shade my lifeless face ;  
One would not, sure, be frightful when one's dead—  
And—Betty—give this cheek a little red.

Our early writers notice these arts to perpetuate youthful charms quite as frequently as the mode modern. In Ben Jonson's *Silent Woman*, *Otter*, a land and sea captain, says of his wife—"Her teeth were made in the Black-friars, both her eye-brows i' the Strand, and her hair in Silver-street. Every part of the town holds a piece of her. She takes herself asunder, when she goes to bed, into some twenty boxes ; and about next day, at noon, is put together again like a German clock ; and so comes forth, and sings a tedious larum to the whole house."

Hamlet's meditation on the skull of a painted lady is well known. And in Massenger's play of *A Very Woman* we have—

- P.* Morrow, Sister,  
Do I not come unseasonably ?  
*A.* Why, good Brother ?  
*P.* Because you are not yet fully made up,  
Nor fit for visitation. There are ladies  
And great ones, that will hardly grant access,  
On any terms, to their own fathers, as  
They are themselves, nor willingly be seen

Before they have ask'd counsel of their doctor,  
 How the Ceruce will appear newly laid on,  
 When they ask a blessing.

- A. Such, indeed, there are,  
 That would be still young in despite of time.  
 That in the wrinkled winter of their age  
 Would force a seeming April of fresh beauty,  
 As if it were within the power of art  
 To frame a second nature. But for me,  
 And for your mistress I dare say as much,  
 The faces, and the teeth you see, we slept with.

Pope in versifying Donne's Satires has on this subject quite lost the point of the original. Donne is ridiculing a character who is more knowing than other people upon a variety of trifling matters. The poet brings his sagacity to the following climax :

Wiser than all us,  
 He knows what lady is *not* painted.

Pope's version has regard more to the odiousness than the frequency of painting, and does not impose an Herculean labor on the observer.

And last (which proves him wiser still than all)  
 What lady's face is not a whited wall.

The attempts made to prolong the reputation of waning charms are too often imputed without reason. Among persons like those who compose the following coterie, such imputations would pass very current, without much inquiry. The speakers are Lady *Sneerwell*, *Crabtree*, Sir *Benjamin Backbite*, and Mrs. *Candour*.

*Lady S.* What's the matter, Mrs. Candour?

*Mrs. C.* Why, they are so censorious, they won't allow our friend, Miss *Vermillion*, to be handsome.

*Lady S.* Oh, surely she's a pretty woman.

*Crab.* I'm glad you think so.

*Mrs. C.* She has a charming fresh colour.

*Lady S.* Yes, when it is *fresh* put on.

*Mrs. C.* Well, I'll swear 'tis natural, for I've seen it *come and go*.

*Lady S.* Yes, it comes at night, and goes again in the morning.

*Sir B.* True, Madam, it not only goes and comes, but, what's more, her maid can fetch and carry it.

*Mrs. C.* Well—and what do you think of her sister?

*Crab.* What, Mrs. Evergreen—'foregad, she's six and fifty if she is a day.

*Mrs. C.* Nay, I'll swear two or three and sixty is the outside—I don't think she looks more.

*Sir B.* Oh, there's no judging by her looks, unless we could see her face.

*Lady S.* Well, if Mrs. Evergreen does take some pains to repair the ravages of time, she certainly effects it with great ingenuity; and surely that's better than the careless manner in which the widow *Oaker* chalks her wrinkles.

*Sir B.* Nay, now my Lady Sneerwell, you are too severe upon the widow—come, it is not that she paints so ill, but, when she has finished her face, she joins it so badly to her neck, that she looks like a mended statue, in which the Connoisseur may see at once, that the head is modern, though the trunk is antique.

*Crab.* What do you think of Miss Simper?

*Sir B.* Why she has pretty teeth.

*Lady S.* Yes, and upon that account never shuts her mouth, but keeps it always ajar, as it were, thus.

*Omnes.* Ha! ha! ha!

*Lady S.* And, yet I vow that's better than the pains Mrs. Prim takes to conceal the loss in front. She draws her mouth till it resembles the aperture of a poor box, and all her words appear to slide out edge-ways, as it were thus. "How do you do, Madam?—Yes, Madam."

The difficulty of keeping up that uniformity which a resemblance to nature requires, when art has so large a share in the appearance of different features, could not fail to draw on it the remarks of the parties engaged in the foregoing conversation; of one lady they observe, "Her face resembles a *table d'hôte* at Spa, where no two guests are of a nation. Another's face is compared to a congress at the close of a general war, where every member seems to have a different interest, and the nose and chin are the only parties like to join issue." One of the writers in the *Connoisseur* relates the accident of his carrying off half a lady's face by a salute, for he found that his kisses had been given, like those of Pyramus to Thisbe, through a wall.

It is a gratifying consolation, and one which is elevating to the human species, to reflect on those attractions which belong to woman in the absence of, or after the decay of beauty, and which distinguish her from the members of the animal and vegetable kingdoms. It is only to be regretted that it too often happens that the homage paid to beauty turns the head, and withdraws the mind from self-improvement. Accordingly when beauty goes, it amounts to what underwriters of ships call a "total loss" of the human wreck; and admirers as well as the rest of the world, in the same phraseology, "abandon." Dugald Stewart, in his essay on the *Beautiful*, after noticing, that although our first notions of beauty may have been derived from colors, it does not

follow that, in our more complex ideas of the beautiful, color should be an essential ingredient, continues thus—"It is by a progress somewhat similar, that the mental attractions of a beautiful woman supplant those of her person in the heart of her lover; and that, when the former have the good fortune to survive the latter, they appropriate to themselves, by an imperceptible metaphor, that language, which, in its literal sense, has ceased to have a meaning. In this case, a very pleasing arrangement of nature is exhibited; the qualities of mind, which insensibly stole, in the first instance, those flattering epithets which are descriptive of a *fair exterior*, now restoring their borrowed embellishments, and keeping alive, in the eye of conjugal affection, that beauty which has long perished to every other."

This subject of the durable nature of female attractions, notwithstanding the loss of beauty, is thus touched by Carew—

He that loves a rosy cheek,  
Or a coral lip admires,  
Or from star-like eyes doth seek  
Fuel to maintain his fires;  
As old time makes these decay  
So his flames must waste away.

But a smooth and steadfast mind,  
Gentle thoughts, and calm desires,  
Hearts with equal love combined,  
Kindle never-dying fires.

The same train of thought is the subject of one of Shakespeare's Sonnets. Various opinions have been expressed concerning the objects of these sonnets. They were published in a mysterious manner by Thorpe, a book-seller, being dedicated to "Mr. W. H. The only begetter of these sonnets." Questions have arisen whether they were, in fact, addressed to



a man or a woman, and whether to one or more persons. The following has all the appearance of a *bonâ fide* love sonnet, and may not be thought unworthy of the Swan of Avon.

Let me not to the marriage of true minds  
 Admit impediments. Love is not love  
 Which alters when it alteration finds,  
 Or bends with the remover to remove.  
 O no ! it is an ever fixed mark  
 That looks on tempests, and is never shaken ;  
 It is the star to every wandering bark,  
 Whose worth's unknown, altho' his height be taken.  
 Love's not time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks  
 Within his bending sickle's compass come.  
 Love alters not with his brief times and weeks,  
 But bears it out even to the edge of doom.  
 If this be error, and upon me proved,  
 I never writ, nor no man ever lov'd.

Our subject leads us to a notice of some remarks on the duration of beauty, in one of Dryden's prose dedications. The language and style of these compositions have never been excelled, but the compliments with which they are filled, are, perhaps, more fulsome and extravagant than any which have been offered, except to sovereigns and other persons not supposed to comprehend, or at least to relish the language of truth. The following extract contains a less high-flown panegyric on beauty than the dedication to the Duchess of York of Dryden's dramatised *Paradise Lost*, but it is more pertinent to our text ; it is addressed to the Duchess of Monmouth. " But as needful as beauty is, virtue and honor are yet more. The reign of it without their support is unsafe and short, like that of tyrants. Every sun which looks on beauty wastes it ; and, when it once is decaying, the repairs of art are of as short continuance, as the after spring, when the sun is going further off. This, madam, is its ordinary fate ; but yours, which is accompanied



by virtue, is not subject to that common destiny. Your Grace has not only a long time of youth in which to flourish, but you have likewise found the way, by an untainted preservation of your honor, to make that perishable good more lasting. And if beauty, like wines, could be preserved by being mixed and embodied with others of their own natures, then your Grace's would be immortal, since no part of Europe can afford a parallel to your noble lord in masculine beauty, and in goodness of shape. To receive the blessings and prayers of mankind you need only to be seen together. We are ready to conclude that you are a *pair of angels* sent below to make virtue amiable in your persons, or to sit to poets, when they would pleasantly instruct the age, by drawing goodness in the most perfect and alluring shape of nature."

The subject may be concluded with the following well known *Melody* by Moore—

Believe me, if all those endearing young charms  
Which I gaze on so fondly to-day,  
Were to change by to-morrow, and fleet in my arms,  
Like fairy gifts fading away!  
Thou would'st still be adored, as this moment thou art,  
Let thy loveliness fade as it will,  
And around the dear ruin each wish of my heart  
Would entwine itself verdantly still!

It is not while beauty and youth are thine own,  
And thy cheeks unprofaned by a tear,  
That the fervor and faith of a soul can be known,  
To which time will but make thee more dear!  
O! the heart that has truly loved, never forgets  
But as truly loves on to the close,  
As the sun-flower turns on her god, when he sets,  
The same look which she turned when he rose.

## CHAPTER II.

ON THE DOTAGES, INFIRMITIES AND EXCENTRICITIES OF OLD AGE.

ONE of the most amusing of the instances of dotage, which literature furnishes, is the scene between Gil Blas and the Archbishop of Grenada. The Archbishop, who had been charmed by Gil Blas' flattery on the subject of his Homilies, appointed him the depository of his thoughts; but at the same time gave warning, that, if in consequence of age or infirmities, his future Homilies should draw less admiration from the public, and he should learn the fact first from any other quarter, he would strike Gil Blas' name out of his will. The Archbishop was attacked by an apoplectic stroke. His next Homily was a burlesque on pulpit eloquence, the congregation whispered to each other—"Voila un sermon qui sent l'apoplexie." Gil Blas thought the time had come for the arbiter of Homilies to interpose; still he was at a loss how to break the subject to the Archbishop.

"Heureusement, l'orateur lui-même me tira de cet embarras en me demandant ce qu'on disoit de lui dans le monde, et si l'on étoit satisfait de son dernier discours. Je répondis qu'on admiroit toujours ses homélies, mais qu'il me sembloit que la dernière n'avoit pas si bien que les autres affecté l'auditoire." "Comment donc! mon ami, répliqua-t-il avec étonnement, auroit-elle trouvé quelque aristarque?—Non, monseigneur, lui repartis-je, non. Ce ne sont pas des ouvrages tels que les vôtres que l'on ose critiquer; il n'y a personne

qui n'en soit charmé. Néanmoins, puisque vous m'avez recommandé d'être franc et sincère, je prendrai la liberté de vous dire que votre dernier discours ne me paroît pas tout-à-fait de la force des précédents. Ne pensez-vous pas cela comme moi ?”

Ces paroles firent pâlir mon maître, qui me dit avec un souris forcé : “ Monsieur Gil Blas, cette pièce n'est donc pas de votre goût ?—Je ne dis pas cela, monseigneur, interrompis-je tout déconcerté. Je la trouve excellente, quoique un peu au-dessous de vos autres ouvrages.—Je vous entends, répliqua-t-il. Je vous parois baisser, n'est-ce pas ? tranchez le mot, vous croyez qu'il est temps que je songe à la retraite ?—Je n'aurois pas été assez hardi, lui dis-je, pour vous parler si librement, si votre grandeur ne me l'eût ordonné. Je ne fais donc que lui obéir, et je la supplie très-humblement de ne me point savoir mauvais gré de ma hardiesse.—A Dieu ne plaise, enterrompit-il avec précipitation, à Dieu ne plaise que je vous la reproche ; il faudroit que je fusse bien injuste. Je ne trouve point de tout mauvais que vous me disiez votre sentiment, c'est votre sentiment seul que je trouve mauvais. J'ai été furieusement la dupe de votre intelligence bornée.”

Quoique démonté, je voulus chercher quelques modifications pour rajuster les choses ; mais le moyen d'apaiser un auteur irrité, et, de plus, un auteur accoutumé à s'entendre louer ? “ N'en parlons plus, dit-il, mon enfant. Vous êtes encore trop jeune pour démêler le vrai du faux. Apprenez que je n'ai jamais composé de meilleure homélie que celle qui n'a pas votre approbation. Mon esprit, grâce au ciel, n'a rien encore perdu de sa vigueur. Désormais je choisirai mieux mes confidants ; j'en veux de plus capables que vous de décider. Allez, poursuivit-il, en me poussant par les épaules hors de

son cabinet, allez dire à mon trésorier qu'il vous compte cent ducats, et que le ciel vous conduise avec cette somme. Adieu, monsieur Gil Blas ; je vous souhaite toutes sortes de prospérités, *avec un peu plus de goût.*" Swift, after contending that there was no such thing as a *fine old gentleman* ; for that a man who had a mind or body worth a farthing must have worn them out before he could be called old, entreated Mrs. Whiteway to mention to him any decay she might observe in his faculties :—" No, Sir," she replied ; " I have read Gil Blas."

Pope, after Horace, has intimated the prudence of elderly people resigning in due time to younger men those occupations, the continuance of which is calculated to draw ridicule on their gray hairs.

St. John, whose love indulged my labors past,  
 Matures my present, and shall bound my last,  
 Why will you break the Sabbath of my age,  
 Now sick alike of envy and of praise ?  
 Public too long, ah, let me hide my age !  
 See, modest Cibber now has left the stage ;  
 Our generals now retired to their estates  
 Hang their old trophies o'er the garden gates,  
 In Life's cool evening, satiate of applause,  
 Nor fond of bleeding even in Brunswick's cause.  
 A voice there is that whispers in my ear  
 (Its Reason's voice, which sometimes one can hear)  
 Friend *Pope* ! be prudent, let your muse take breath,  
 And never gallop Pegasus to death.  
 Lest stiff and stately, void of fire and force ;  
 You limp like Blackmore on a Lord Mayor's horse.

And again, in another Epistle—

Learn to live well, or fairly make your will,  
 You've play'd, and lov'd, and eat, and drank your fill.

Walk sober off, before a sprightlier age  
 Comes tittering on, and shoves you from the stage.  
 Leave such to trifle with more grace and ease  
 Whom folly pleases, and whose follies please.

The Romans had an old custom for which various reasons are assigned in Ovid's *Fasti*, but which is very intelligible, if regarded as a hint to old people not to stand in the way of the young in transactions more suitable to youth. On the 13th or Ides of May the images of thirty old men made of rushes used to be thrown from the Sublician bridge by the Vestal Virgins, attended by the Magistrates and Priests. It was a tradition that in the ancient times the same number of old men were thrown alive annually from the same bridge into the Tiber. In those ancient days, the virgins probably made a selection analogous to what would take place, if we had liberty to throw into the water old persons who continued to preach after losing their teeth, or bachelors turned of forty, or old married men who ask spinsters to dance at balls.

One of the principal occasions on which Old Age is exposed to ridicule or censure, is where an old person marries a young one. Instances may, no doubt, be cited of such unions being judicious and happy, but the reverse generally happens, as on most occasions when a deviation is made from the order of nature. There is a curious masque by Ben Jonson, called the *Masque of Gypsies*. It was performed at Burleigh on the Hill before King James, the celebrated Duke of Buckingham acting the part of the Captain of the Gypsies. After examining the hands of the king and the lords and ladies present, a few characteristic verses are addressed to



each. To the Countess of Exeter, a young woman married to an Earl whose age was 70, is spoken,

An old man's wife  
Is the light of his life,  
A young one is but his shade.

Similar verses were addressed by Pan, in an entertainment, called the *Penates*, performed at Highgate. As it is to be presumed, especially from the frequent repetition of the Masque of Gypsies at various places before the king, that the personalities contained in the verses were appropriate, and agreeable to the taste of the Court, these compositions may seem to deserve greater attention, as illustrative of the manners of the times, and of personal history, than they have ever received. They are more satirical, even when addressed to royalty, than adulatory, though the following lines spoken by Buckingham, as Captain of the Gypsies, to James, would wash down a good deal of raillery.

Your Mercury's hill too, a wit doth betoken,  
Some book craft you have, and are pretty well spoken.

The subject of an old man marrying a young wife is touched upon with much humor in the characters of January and May, in Chaucer's Merchant's Tale. Pope has translated the tale into very harmonious modern verse; but both he and Dryden have entirely failed in preserving Chaucer's simplicity of narrative, and his humor.

Whilom there was dwelling in Lumbardie  
A worthy knight that born was at Pavie,  
In which he lived in gret prosperitee,  
And sixty yere a wifes man was he.  
And whan that he was passed sixty yere,  
Were it for holiness or for dotage



I cannot saie, but swiche a greet corage  
 Hadde this knight to ben a wedded man,  
 That night and day he doth all that he can,  
 To espien wher that he might wedded be.

He calls in two friends *Placebo* and *Justinus* to advise him. *Placebo* advises the marriage; intimating that when asked for advice, after the asker has given his own opinion, he has always found it safest to "say the same, or elles things semblable." Justinus, on the other hand, quotes Seneca to shew that it is "no childe's play" to "take a wif without avisement." That with regard to himself he found matrimony only "cost and care." And although all his neighbours, and "of women many a route" declared that he had the steadiest and meekest of wives that ever breathed; nevertheless "But I woot best, where wringeth me my sho." As *Placebo* intimated, January falls into a great rage with Justinus, saying "straw for Senek, and straw for thy proverbs;" and he forthwith pays his addresses to May, a damsel "of age tendre, hire middle smal, hire arms long and slendere." But before the nuptials a doubt perplexes him; he called to mind having read that a man cannot be happy both in heaven and earth, and therefore is afraid that his matrimonial felicity may shut him out of heaven. He calls his friends together to advise him upon this point. On this occasion Justinus jeers him with much ironical humor, which is lost in Pope's version. The following is a part of Justinus' suggestions:

Justinus, which that hated his folie,  
 Answered anon right in his japerie;  
 And said—"Sire, so ther be non obstacle  
 Other than this, God, of his high miracle,  
 And of his mercy may so for you werche,  
 That er ye have your rights of holy cherche,

Ye may repent of wedded manne's lif,  
 In which ye sain there is no wo ne strif.  
 And elles God forbid, but if he sent  
 A wedded man his grace him to repent  
 Wel often, rather than a single man.  
 And, therefore, Sire, the best rede that I can,  
 Despeire you not, but haven in memoire,  
 Paraventure she may be your purgatorie.  
 She may be Godde's mene, and Godde's whippe,  
 That shall your soul make up to heven skippe.

January at last marries May. The marriage ceremony in Chaucer's time shews that the language of the exhortations was not altogether changed at the Reformation.

Forth cometh the Preest, with stole about his nekke,  
 And bade hire be like Sara and Rebekke.

The bed is blessed by the Priest, according to Catholic usage, and the bride is brought to it, "as still as ston." Soon after marriage, January becomes blind, and very jealous; whilst May falls in love with a young squire who waited on her husband. In order that she may talk to the squire without being overheard by her blind husband, who followed her wherever she went, she pretends a sudden longing for some pears in a pear tree, up which her lover had previously ascended, and she makes her husband kneel, in order that she may step upon his back, and get up into the tree.

For ought that may betide,  
 I moste have of the peres that I see,  
 Or I moste die, so sore longeth me  
 To eten of the smale peres grene,  
 Help for hire love that is of heven quene!  
 I tell you wel a woman in my plit,  
 May have to fruit so great an appetit,  
 That she may dien, but she of it have.  
 "Then wol I clumber wel ynough (quod she)  
 So I my fote might setten on your back."  
 "Certes," said he "therein shal be no lack  
 Might I you helpen with min herte blood."

He stoupeth doun, and on his back she stood,  
And caught hire by a twist, and up she goth.

In Swift's poem "The Progress of Marriage," he supposes some consequences which might naturally follow from an injudicious union of January and May.

*Ætatis suæ* fifty-two,  
A rich Divine began to woo  
A handsome young imperious girl,  
Nearly related to an Earl.  
Then on her finger's end she counts,  
Exact to what his age amounts,  
"The Dean," she heard her uncle say,  
"Is sixty, if he be a day.  
His ruddy cheeks are no disguise;  
You see the *crow's feet* round his eyes."

His mind is full of other cares,  
And, in the sneaking parson's airs,  
Computes that half a parish dues  
Will hardly find his wife in shoes.

Hither (Bath), though much against the grain,  
The Dean has carried Lady Jane.  
He, for a while, would not consent,  
But vowed his money all was spent.  
His money spent! a clownish reason;  
And must my Lady slip her season?  
The Doctor, with a double fee,  
Was brib'd to make the Dean agree.

He dies, and leaves his mourning mate  
(What could be less?) his whole estate.  
The widow goes through all her forms;  
New lovers now will come in swarms.  
Oh, may I see her soon dispensing  
Her favors to some broken Ensign.

Lord Erskine, when at the Bar, in the case of *Morton v. Fenn*, which was an action brought by a middle-aged woman against an old and infirm man, for breach of promise of mar-

riage, thus describes the defendant. "It is probable, that her (the plaintiff's) circumstances were very low, from the character in which she was introduced to the defendant, who being an old and infirm man, was desirous of some elderly person as a housekeeper, and no imputation can be justly cast upon the plaintiff for consenting to such an introduction; for, by Mr. Wallace's favour, the jury had a view of this defendant, and the very sight of him rebutted every suspicion that could possibly fall upon a woman of any age, constitution, or complexion. I am sure every body who was in court must agree with me, that all the diseases catalogued in the dispensary seemed to be running a race for his life, though the asthma appeared to have completely distanced his competitors, as the fellow was blowing like a smith's bellows the whole time of the trial. His teeth being all gone, I shall say nothing of his gums; and as to his shape, to be sure, a bass-fiddle is perfect gentility compared to it." He concluded with expressing a wish, that the young woman whom the defendant had married "would manifest her affection by furnishing him with a pair of horns, sufficient to defend himself against the sheriff, when he came to levy the money under the verdict."

The effects of the tender passion upon *females* of a *certain age* are thus described by Fielding, in *Tom Jones*. "It hath been observed by wise men or women, I forget which, that all persons are doomed to be in love once in their lives. No particular season, as I remember, is assigned for this, but the age at which Miss Bridget was arrived, seems to me as proper a period as any to be fixed on for this purpose. It often indeed, happens much earlier; but, when it does not, I have observed, it seldom or never fails about this time. Moreover,

we may remark, that, at this season, love is of a more serious and steady nature than what sometimes shews itself in the younger parts of life. The love of girls is uncertain, capricious, and so foolish, that we cannot always discover what the young lady would be at; nay, it may almost be doubted, whether she always knows this herself. Now we are never at a loss to discern this in women about *forty*. For, as such grave, serious, and experienced ladies well know their own meaning; so it is always very easy for a man of the least sagacity to discover it with the utmost certainty. And to say the truth, there is, in all points, great difference between the reasonable passion which women at this age conceive towards men, and the idle and childish liking of a girl to a boy, which is often fixed on the outside only, and on things of little value, and no duration; as on cherry cheeks, small lily-white hands, sloe-black eyes, flowing locks, downy chins, dapper shapes; nay, sometimes on charms more worthless than these, and less the party's own; such are the outward ornaments of the person, for which men are beholden to the tailor, the laceman, the perriwig-maker, the hatter, and the milliner, and not to nature. Such a passion girls may well be ashamed, as they generally are, to own either to themselves or to others."

Quintilian, in his institutes of eloquence, in a chapter where he speaks of the means which were sometimes resorted to for the purpose of affecting the minds of a public assembly,—mentions a failure of an attempt of this kind. The advocate for a young widow wanted to produce a great effect in his peroration by pointing to a waxen image of her deceased husband. But unfortunately the people who had the charge of the image, not understanding their orders, held it



up whenever the orator looked towards the place where they stood. The image was that of an ugly old man, which in fact her husband was. The contrast with the pretty widow who was also present, and weeping in her weeds, occasioned, among the Romans in the Forum, a general burst of laughter. Quintilian gives some other curious illustrations. The production of Julius Cæsar's bloody robe had a powerful effect. He mentions how an opposing counsel has sometimes parried an exhibition of this nature. One advocate took up his client, a little boy, in his arms; his adversary immediately turned to his own client, a large fat man, and said he was sorry, he was not able to dangle *him*. Another advocate produced the children of his client, in order to move compassion, when his opponent threw amongst them a handful of marbles, for which they began scrambling and fighting.

Our literature contains several poetical descriptions of the infirmities incident to old age. We have an allegorical picture of old age by one of the most distinguished authors in our very early literature, Sackville, (Lord Buckhurst and Earl of Dorset.) To the second edition of the *Mirror of Magistrates*, which was published 1563, (four years after the first edition,) Sackville contributed the *Induction*, and the *Legend of Buckingham*. The *Mirror of Magistrates* was continued, by the addition of legends written by various authors, into the reign of James. It would seem to have been of great use in directing the attention of our ancestors to historical events, and, in that way, probably stimulated them in maintaining and advancing the liberties of the country. Sackville's *Induction* is generally considered as evincing more genius than any other of the contributions to the *Mirror of*

Magistrates. There is reason to believe that its allegories led the way to those of the Faery Queen. After the manner of Dante's *Inferno*, Sackville describes several allegorical characters with whom he meets in the infernal regions—amongst others is the following :

And next in order sad Old Age we found,  
His beard all hoar, his eyes hollow and blind ;  
With-drooping cheer still poring on the ground,  
As on the place where nature him assigned  
To rest, when that the sisters had entwin'd  
His vital thread, and ended with their knife  
The fleeting course of fast declining life.

Crook'd-back'd he was, tooth-shaken, and blear-ey'd,  
Went on three feet, and sometime crept on four ;  
With old lame bones that rattled by his side,  
His scalp all pill'd, and he with eld forlore,  
His wither'd fist still knocking at Death's door ;  
Trembling and driv'ling as he draws his breath,  
For brief, the shape, and messenger of Death.

In Dr. Johnson's *Vanity of Human Wishes*, which is a paraphrase of a satire of Juvenal, with modern illustrations in the place of the ancient examples, we have a catalogue of the miseries of old age which is nearly complete.

“ Enlarge my life with multitude of days.”  
In health, in sickness, thus the suppliant prays.  
Hides from himself his state, and shuns to know  
That life protracted is protracted woe.  
Time hovers o'er, impatient to destroy,  
And shuts up all passages of joy :  
In vain their gifts the bounteous seasons pour,  
The fruit autumnal, and the vernal flow'r ;  
With listless eyes the dotard views the store,  
He views, and wonders that they please no more ;  
Now pall the tasteless meats, and joyless wines ;  
And luxury with sighs her slave resigns.

Approach, ye minstrels, try the soothing strain,  
 Diffuse the tuneful lenitives of pain :  
 No sounds, alas ! would touch th' impervious ear,  
 Though dancing mountains witness'd Orpheus near.  
 Nor lute nor lyre his feeble pow'rs attend,  
 Nor sweeter music of a virtuous friend ;  
 But everlasting dictates crowd his tongue,  
 Perversely grave, or positively wrong.  
 The still returning tale, and ling'ring jest  
 Perplex the fawning niece, and pamper'd guest,  
 While growing hopes scarce awe the gathering sneer,  
 And scarce a legacy can bribe to hear :  
 The watchful guests still hint the last offence ;  
 The daughter's petulance, the son's expense,  
 Improve his heady rage with treach'rous skill,  
 And mould his passions till they make his will.

Unnumber'd maladies his joints invade,  
 Lay siege to life, and press the dire blockade ;  
 But unextinguish'd av'rice still remains,  
 And dreaded losses aggravate his pains ;  
 He turns, with anxious heart and crippled hands,  
 His bonds of debt, and mortgages of lands ;  
 Or views his coffers with suspicious eyes,  
 Unlocks his gold, and counts it till he dies.

But grant, the virtues of a temp'rate prime  
 Bless with an age exempt from scorn or crime ;  
 An age that melts with unperceiv'd decay,  
 And glides in modest innocence away ;  
 Whose peaceful day benevolence endears ;  
 Whose night congratulating science cheers ;  
 The gen'ral favorite as the gen'ral friend :  
 Such age there is, and who shall wish its end ?

Yet ev'n on this her load misfortune flings,  
 To press the weary minutes' flagging wings ;  
 New sorrow rises as the day returns,  
 A sister sickens, or a daughter mourns.  
 Now kindred merit fills the sable bier ;  
 Now lacerated friendship claims a tear ;  
 Year chases year, decay pursues decay,  
 Still drops some joy from with'ring life away ;

New forms arise, and diff'rent views engage,  
 Superfluous lags the vet'ran on the stage,  
 Till pitying nature signs the last release,  
 And bids afflicted worth retire to peace.

But few there are whom hours like these await,  
 Who sit unclouded in the gulfs of fate.  
 From Lydia's monarch should the search descend,  
 By Solon caution'd to regard his end,  
 In life's last scene what prodigies surprise,  
 Fears of the brave, and follies of the wise,  
 From Marlborough's eyes the streams of dotage flow,  
 And Swift expires a driv'ler and a show.

Swift wrote a clever poem with reference to the supposed comments of his friends and acquaintance on the subject of his age, infirmities, and death. The two former of these topics, are alone relevant to our subject.

Yet, thus, methinks, I hear them speak,  
 See how the Dean begins to break !  
 Poor gentleman, he droops apace !  
 You plainly find it in his face.  
 That old vertigo in his head  
 Will never leave him till he's dead.  
 Besides his memory decays,  
 He recollects not what he says ;  
 He cannot call his friends to mind ;  
 Forgets the place where last he dined.  
 Plies you with stories o'er and o'er,  
 He told them fifty times before,  
 How does he fancy we can sit  
 To hear his out-of-fashion wit ?  
 But he takes up with younger folks,  
 Who for his wine, will hear his jokes.  
 Faith ! he must make his stories shorter,  
 Or change his comrades once a quarter.  
 For poetry he's past his prime,  
 He takes an hour to find a rhyme ;  
 His fire is out, his wit decayed,  
 His fancy sunk, his Muse a jade.

I'd have him throw away his pen ;—  
But there's no talking to some men.  
And then their tenderness appears  
By adding largely to my years.  
He's older than he would be reckon'd,  
And well remembers Charles the Second.  
He hardly drinks a pint of wine,  
And that, I doubt, is no good sign.  
His stomach too begins to fail,  
Last year we thought him strong and hale ;  
But now he's quite another thing,  
I wish he may hold out till spring.

Dr. Johnson appears, in the poem above cited, to have exaggerated the infirmities of Marlborough. The duke died in the year 1722, at the age of 72. He had, indeed, attacks of palsy at intervals from 1716, and in consequence he became incapable of articulating some particular words, which made him averse to conversation with strangers. He was in his latest years very sociable with intimate friends, and took an interest in private theatricals at Blenheim. He attended the House of Lords, and its committees till within six months of his death ; being present at every debate on the business of the impeachment of Lord Oxford. He discharged the duties of Captain General, and Master of the Ordnance, till he died.

Neither is the example of Swift altogether in point for the purpose to which Dr. Johnson applies it. It is, indeed, related by Swift's biographers, that his servants sometimes took money for *showing* him during his insanity. But independently of his general fame, many Irishmen would have been anxious to have seen the *Drapier* once in their lives, under any circumstances and at any price. He died in 1745, at the age of 78. In 1741, he became incapable of conversa-



tion, and in the beginning of 1742, his reason was wholly subverted. But, so early as 1717, pointing out to Dr. Young an old elm tree which was much withered in its upper branches, Swift said, "I shall be like that tree, I shall die at the top." And in 1732, he entertained the design of building a lunatic asylum, to which £10,000 of his property was afterwards appropriated. His own account of the design is thus—

He gave the little wealth he had,  
To build a house for fool or mad,  
To show by one satiric touch,  
No nation wanted it so much.

Swift's letters to the Countess of Suffolk in 1726 contain numerous complaints of giddiness in the head. He talks of a "hundred oceans roaring in his ears, into which no sense had been pressed for a fortnight." He says he got his giddiness by "eating a hundred golden pippins at a time at Richmond." The utter political defeat of Swift's party in consequence of Queen Anne's death, at the moment when they were anticipating the brightest prospects,—may have aggravated his constitutional infirmities. In reference to that event Arbuthnot writes to Pope—"I have seen a letter from Dean Swift; he keeps up his noble spirit, and though like a man knocked down, you may behold him still with a stern countenance, and aiming a blow at his adversaries." And in our enquiry into the causes why Swift became "a driveller and a show," we must consider the heart-rending scenes which preceded the death of Stella in 1728, after an intimacy of no ordinary kind during 25 years, and after a marriage, that had been kept secret, but which had subsisted for thirteen years. We must also bear in mind, that, shortly be-

fore Stella's death, Swift had, by his conduct, occasioned the death of Vanessa, whose praises he had often sung, and whom for many years he had held bound to himself by the most ardent attachment. Under all these circumstances, physical and mental, we may, perhaps, think that the gloomy character of Swift's "last scene of all," is not strictly or at least mainly imputable to the effects of *age*. Cowper was as mad as Swift, and, indeed, attempted to destroy himself, at the age of 32; though he did not commence his career as an author till he was 50. His poetry was composed in lucid intervals during a life which was continued to the age of 69.

But, perhaps, in the last days of Charles V. we may recognize some more unequivocal proofs of the influence of dotage; the description, which begins earlier, is by Robertson, who was long considered, if the title be not still appropriate, one of the Triumvirate of English Historians.

"While these preliminary steps were taking towards a treaty which restored tranquillity to Europe, Charles V., whose ambition had so long disturbed it, ended his days in the monastery of St. Justus. When Charles entered this retreat, he formed such a plan of life for himself, as would have suited the condition of a private gentleman of a moderate fortune. His table was neat, but plain; his domestics few; his intercourse with them familiar; all the cumbersome and ceremonious forms of attendance on his person were entirely abolished, as destructive of that social ease and tranquillity which he courted in order to soothe the remainder of his days. As the mildness of the climate, together with his deliverance from the burdens and cares of Government, procured him, at first, a considerable remission from the acute

pains with which he had been long tormented ; he enjoyed, perhaps, more complete satisfaction in his humble solitude, than all his grandeur had ever yielded him. The ambitious thoughts and projects which had so long engrossed and disquieted him, were quite effaced from his mind : far from taking any part in the political transactions of the princes of Europe, he restrained his curiosity even from any inquiry concerning them ; and he seemed to view the busy scene which he had abandoned with all the contempt and indifference arising from his thorough experience of its vanity, as well as from the pleasing reflection of having disentangled himself from its cares.

Other amusements and other objects now occupied him. Sometimes he cultivated the plants in his garden with his own hands ; sometimes he rode out to the neighbouring wood on a little horse, the only one that he kept, attended by a single servant on foot. When his infirmities confined him to his apartment, which often happened, and deprived him of these more active recreations, he either admitted a few gentlemen who resided near the monastery to visit him, and entertained them familiarly at his table ; or he employed himself in studying mechanical principles, and in the forming curious works of mechanism, of which he had always been remarkably fond, and to which his genius was peculiarly turned. With this view he had engaged Turriano, one of the most ingenious artists of that age, to accompany him in his retreat. He laboured together with him in framing models of the most useful machines, as well as in making experiments with regard to their respective powers, and it was not seldom that the ideas of the monarch assisted or perfected the inventions of the artist. He relieved his mind, at inter-

vals, with slighter and more fantastic works of mechanism, in fashioning puppets, which, by the structure of internal springs, mimicked the gestures and actions of men, to the astonishment of the ignorant monks, who beholding movements which they could not comprehend, sometimes distrusted their own senses, and sometimes suspected Charles and Turriano of being in compact with invisible powers. He was particularly curious with regard to the construction of clocks and watches ; and having found, after repeated trials, that he could not bring any two of them to go exactly alike, he reflected, it is said, with a mixture of surprise as well as regret, on his own folly, in having bestowed so much time and labour on the more vain attempt of bringing mankind to a precise uniformity of sentiment concerning the profound and mysterious doctrines of religion.

But in what manner soever Charles disposed of the rest of his time, he constantly reserved a considerable portion of it for religious exercises. He regularly attended divine service in the chapel of the monastery, every morning and evening ; he took great pleasure in reading books of devotion, particularly the works of St. Augustine and St. Bernard ; and conversed much with his confessor, and the prior of the monastery, on pious subjects.

Thus did Charles pass the first year of his retreat, in a manner not unbecoming a man perfectly disengaged from the affairs of the present life, and standing on the confines of a future world ; either in innocent amusements, which soothed his pains, and relieved a mind worn out with excessive application to business ; or in devout occupations, which he deemed necessary in preparing for another state.

But about six months before his death, the gout, after a

longer intermission than usual, returned with a proportional increase of violence. His shattered constitution had not vigour enough remaining to withstand such a shock. It enfeebled his mind as much as his body, and from this period we hardly discern any traces of that sound and masculine understanding, which distinguished Charles among his contemporaries. An illiberal and timid superstition depressed his spirit. He had no relish for amusements of any kind. He endeavoured to conform, in his manner of living, to all the rigour of monastic austerity. He desired no other society than that of monks, and was almost continually employed with them in chanting the hymns of the Missal. As an expiation for his sins, he gave himself the discipline in secret with such severity, that the whip of cords, which he employed as the instrument of his punishment, was found, after his decease tinged with his blood. Nor was he satisfied with these acts of mortification, which however severe, were not unexampled. The timorous and distrustful solicitude which always accompanies superstition still continued to disquiet him, and depreciating all the devout exercises in which he had hitherto been engaged, prompted him to aim at something extraordinary, at some new and singular act of piety that would display his zeal, and merit the favor of heaven. The act on which he fixed was as wild and uncommon as any that superstition ever suggested to a weak and disordered fancy. He resolved to celebrate his own obsequies before his death. He ordered his tomb to be erected in the chapel of the monastery. His domestics marched thither in funeral procession, with black tapers in their hands. He himself followed in his shroud. He was laid in his coffin with much solemnity. The service of the dead was chanted, and Charles joined in



the prayers which were offered up for the rest of his soul, mingling his tears with those which his attendants shed, as if they had been celebrating a real funeral. The ceremony closed with sprinkling holy water on the coffin in the usual form, and all the assistants retiring, the doors of the Chapel were shut. Then Charles rose out of the coffin, and withdrew to his apartment, full of those awful sentiments which such a singular solemnity was calculated to inspire. But either the fatiguing length of the ceremony, or the impression which the image of death left on his mind, affected him so much, that next day he was seized with a fever. His feeble frame could not long resist its violence, and he expired on the twenty-first of September, after a life of fifty-eight years, six months, and twenty-five-days.

Some persons, for whom worldly power has greater charms than philosophy, may regard the relinquishment of empire as an undeniable proof of dotage, imbecility or aberration of mind. But it is remarkable, that neither Diocletian nor Charles V. who afford the most memorable instances of abdications of empire in history, were, when they retired into private life, of a very advanced age. The former was only 55 and the latter was not quite 59. Charles had met with disappointments in his schemes of ambition. But the reign of Diocletian was signalized by uninterrupted success. It is remarkable also that he had been born a slave. His abdication, if not also that of Charles, ought, perhaps, to be regarded rather as an instance of strength of mind than of dotage. We have few authentic notices of the nine years which Diocletian spent in retirement, (Charles spent only three.) He used to expatiate on the errors to which Governors were subject, from being obliged to see and hear with the eyes and

ears of other people. His answer to some inducements which were held out for resuming the imperial purple do not establish imbecility. It is, indeed, called by Gibbon, a *bon-mot*. "If I could shew the cabbages I have planted with my own hands at Salona, I should not be urged to relinquish the enjoyment of happiness for the pursuit of power."

It may be observed that, in old and quiet monarchies, where affairs of State are not attended with the wear and tear which must have been felt by Diocletian and Charles V. in no ordinary degree, Government has been represented by Voltaire as an agreeable occupation for old age.

La Parque de ses vilains doigts  
Marquait d'un sept avec un trois  
La tête froide et peu pensante  
De Fleuri, qui donna des lois  
A notre France languissante,  
Il porta le sceptre des Rois  
Et le garda jusqu'à *nonante*.  
Regner est un amusement  
Pour un viellard triste et pesant,  
De tout autre chose incapable.  
Mais vieux bel-esprit, vieux amant,  
Vieux chanteur est insupportable.

With regard to Governments directed by Old Men, a singular phenomenon in the political history of the world is an ecclesiastical and temporal Government in the hands of the Popes. For a long time they have not been eligible under the age of 55 ; and few have been elected before they had attained nearly 70. Leo X. was, indeed, only 37, but independently of the great interest of the Medici family, he was so promisingly ill during the sitting of the conclave that a physician was sent for, who was strictly locked up, like the Cardinals, till they finished the election. Leo only

wore his crown nine years. Robertson and Gibbon have very philosophically considered the consequences which might be naturally looked for as resulting from such a Government, which is exempt from the dangers of minorities and the sallies of youth, but where the Popes would usually be eager to make the most of the short period during which they have the prospect of enjoying power, in order to aggrandize their own family, and to attain their private ends. The reflexions of these distinguished historians are not the less just, because we may occasionally meet, as during the pontificate of Leo X., with some acts which might be expected to emanate from a young sovereign, influenced by all the benevolent feelings for futurity, as well as for the present generation, which Bolinbroke ascribes to his *Patriot King*. But on the general tenor of the administration of the Popes, it may be curious to extract a passage from the translation of Erasmus's *Encomium on Folly*. Erasmus was the precursor of Luther, but would not follow him to all the lengths of his zeal, which sometimes partook of intemperance. For this he incurred Luther's bitter and vindictive animosity. The following passage is supposed to be spoken by *Folly* :

“ Now as to the Popes of Rome, who pretend themselves Christ's Vicars, if they would but imitate his exemplary life, in the being employed in an uninterrupted course of preaching ; in the being attended with poverty, nakedness, hunger, and a contempt of this world ; if they did but consider the import of the word *Pope*, which signifies a Father ; or if they did but practise their surname of Most Holy, what order or degrees of men would be in a worse condition ? There would be then no such vigorous making of parties, and buying of votes in the conclave upon a vacancy of that see. And

those, who by bribery, or other indirect courses, should get themselves elected, would never secure their sitting firm in the chair by pistol, poison, force, and violence. How much of their pleasure would be abated, if they were but endowed with one dram of wisdom ? All their riches, all their honour, their jurisdictions, their Peter's patrimony, their offices, their dispensations, their licences, their indulgences, the long train of attendants (see in how short a compass I have abbreviated all their marketing of religion ;) in a word, all their perquisites will be forfeited and lost ; and in their room will succeed watchings, fastings, tears, prayers, sermons, hard studies, repenting sighs, and a thousand such like severe penalties : nay what's yet more deplorable, it would then follow, that all their clerks, amanuenses, notaries, advocates, proctors, secretaries, the offices of grooms, ostlers, serving-men, pimps (and somewhat else, which for modesty's sake I shall not mention ;) in short, all these Troops of attendants, which depend on his Holiness, would all lose their several employments. This indeed would be hard ; but what yet remains would be more dreadful : the very head of the Church, the spiritual prince, would then be brought from all his splendor to the poor equipage of a scrip and staff. But all this is upon the supposition only, that they *understood* what circumstances they are placed in ; whereas now, by a wholesome neglect of thinking, they live as well as heart can wish : whatever of toil and drudgery belong to their office, *that* they assign over to St. Peter, or St. Paul, who have time enough to mind it ; but if there be any thing of pleasure and grandeur, *that* they assume to themselves, as being thereunto called : so that by *my* influence no sort of people live more to their own ease and content."

Prior, in his *Alma*, has some clever lines on the Aged Popes being designated in Protestant, especially Calvinistic countries, as sustaining a more youthful character.

You love maps, and may perceive,  
Rome not far distant from Geneve;  
If the good Pope remains at Rome,  
He's the first Prince in Christendom.  
Choose then, good Pope, at home to stay,  
Nor westward curious take thy way.  
Thy way unhappy shouldst thou take  
From Tyber's bank to Leman lake;  
Thou art an *aged* Priest no more,  
But a *young* flaring painted whore.  
Thy sex is lost, thy town is gone,  
No longer Rome, but Babylon.

Something similar to the vagary which has been above related of Charles V. occurs in the life of Donne. This distinguished Prelate, who has always had the reputation of taking the lead among the wits during the age of conceits, devoted himself to religious studies and exercises after he became the Dean of St. Pauls. Towards the close of his life he did some things, which, perhaps, have the appearance of dotage. Very shortly before his death he preached his own funeral sermon. One day he sent for an eminent painter, and before his arrival he had procured a board of his own length upon which he had himself laid. He was dressed for this purpose in a winding sheet tied with knots at his head and feet; being shrouded and placed just as a dead body in a coffin. When the picture was finished, he kept it by his bedside till he died. He wrote his own epitaph, and with the simplicity of first or second childhood, he mentions in it, that at the late age of 42 he took orders, by the instinct and impulse of the Holy Ghost, and by the admonition and exhortation of King James. (In-



stinctu et impulsu Sp. Sancti. Monitu et Hortatu Regis Jacobi ordines sacros amplexus.)

Wolsey is a remarkable example of the combined effects of age and misfortune on a mind of great capacity. Our poetry, by the talents of Shakspeare and Dr. Johnson, affords us a vivid picture of his prosperous state, and of his adversity. Cavendish, his chamberlain, has supplied the facts. He mentions the Cardinal being supported on his mule, from which he nearly fell several times from weakness in journeying to Leicester abbey; his arrival at the Abbey, and his being received by the abbot and monks who came out to meet him with torches; his speech, "Father Abbot, I am come here to leave my bones among you;" and his words spoken a few hours before his death, "If I had served God as diligently as I have done the king he would not have given me over in my grey hairs." He was not, however, more than 59 years of age. A scene described by Cavendish, shortly after Wolsey delivered up the Great Seal, about a year before his death, is, perhaps, more indicative of a broken spirit, and a mind almost reduced to second childishness, than even the closing hours of his life.

"When he was with all his train arrived and landed at Putney he took his mule, and every man his horse. And setting forth not past the length of a pair of garden butts, he espied a man come riding empost down the hill, in Putney town, demanding of his footman who they thought it should be? And they answered again and said, that they supposed it should be Sir Harry Norris. And by and bye he came to my lord und saluted him, and said "that the King's majesty had him commended to his Grace, and willed him in any wise to be of good cheer, for he was as much in his Highness'

favour as ever he was, and so shall be." And in token thereof, he delivered him a ring of gold, with a rich stone, which ring he knew very well, for it was always the privy token between the King and him, whensoever the King would have any special matter dispatched at his hands. And said furthermore, that "the King commanded him to be of good cheer, and take no thought, for he should not lack." And although the King hath dealt with you unkindly as ye suppose, he saith that "it is for no displeasure that he beareth you, but only to satisfy more the minds of some (which he knoweth be not your friends) than for any indignation:" and also ye know right well, that he is able to recompense you with twice as much as your goods amounteth unto; and all this he bade me, that I should show you, therefore, sir, take patience. And for my part, I trust to see you in better estate than ever ye were. But when he heard Master Norris rehearse all the good and comfortable words of the King, he quickly lighted from off his mule, all alone, *as though he had been the youngest person amongst us*, and incontinent kneeled down in the dirt upon both his knees, holding up his hands for joy. Master Norris, perceiving him so quickly from his mule upon the ground, mused, and was astonished. And therewith he alighted also, and kneeled by him embracing him in his arms, and asked him how he did, calling upon him to credit his message. "Master Norris," quoth he, "when I consider your comfortable and joyful news, I can do no less than to rejoice, for the sudden joy surmounted my memory, having no respect neither to the place nor time, but thought it my very bounden duty to render thanks to God, my Maker, and to the King, my sovereign lord and master, who hath sent me such comfort in the very place where I received the same."

“ And talking with Master Norris upon his knees in the mire, he would have pulled off his under cap of velvet, but he could not undo the knot under his chin ; wherefore with violence he rent the laces and pulled it from his head, and so kneeled bare-headed. And that done, he covered again his head, and arose, and would have mounted his mule, *but he could not mount again with such agility as he lighted before, where his footmen had as much ado to set him in his saddle as they could have.* Then rode he forth up the hill into the town, talking with Master Norris. And when he came upon Putney Heath Master Norris took his leave and would have departed. Then quoth my lord unto him, “ Gentle Norris, if I were lord of a realm, the one half thereof were insufficient a reward to give you for your pains, and good comfortable news. But, good Master Norris, consider with me, that I have nothing left me but my clothes on my back. Therefore I desire you to take this small reward of my hands,” the which was a little chain of gold, made like a bottle chain, with a cross of gold hanging thereat, wherein was a piece of the Holy Cross, which he wore continually about his neck next his skin ; and said furthermore, “ I assure you, Master Norris, that when I was in prosperity, although it seem but small in value, yet I would not gladly have departed with it for the value of a thousand pounds. Therefore I beseech you to take it in gree, and wear it about your neck for my sake, and as often as ye shall happen to look upon it, have me in remembrance to the King’s majesty, as opportunity shall serve you ; unto whose Highness and clemency, I desire you to have me most lowly commended ; for whose charitable disposition towards me, I can do nothing but only minister my prayer unto God for the preservation of his royal estate long to reign in honour

health and quiet life. I am his obedient subject, vassal, and poor chaplain, and do so intend, God willing, to be during my life, accounting that of myself I am of no estimation nor of no substance, but only by him and of him, whom I love better than myself, and have justly and truly served to the best of my gross wit." And with that he took Master Norris by the hand and bade him farewell. And being gone but a small distance he returned, and called Master Norris again, and when he was returned he said unto him. I am sorry—"quoth he, that I have no condign token to send to the King. But if ye would at this my request present the King with this *poor fool*, I trust his Highness would accept him well, for surely for a nobleman's pleasure he is *worth a thousand pounds*;" so Master Norris took the fool with him; with whom my lord was fain to send six of (his) tall yeoman, to conduct and convey the fool to the Court, because the poor fool took on and fired so in such a rage when he saw that he must needs depart from my lord. Yet notwithstanding they conveyed him with Master Norris to the court where the King received him most gladly."

There are some curious circumstances connected with this part of our subject in the life of Newton. He lived to 85, and presided at meetings of the Royal Society till within a month of his death. But he never published a new work after his *Principia* in 1687, when he was 45 years of age. The French mathematician Biot discovered a few years ago, in the correspondence of Huygens and Leibnitz, contemporaries of Newton, in the year 1693, that Newton's mind had been affected about that time in consequence of some of his papers having been lost by fire. This new fact appears to have excited attention to an old diary in the possession of the pre-

sent Professor of Political Economy at Cambridge which had been kept by an ancestor who lived in Trinity College at the same time Newton resided there. In the diary it is mentioned that the manuscripts had been destroyed by a fire, and of Newton, it is said, "every one thought he would have run mad; he was so troubled thereat that he was not himself for a month after." There are extant letters from Newton to Locke and to Pepys, written about the period adverted to by Biot, which certainly indicate a nervous and irritable state of mind, not at all consonant with his general character. La Place and Biot intimate that this accident occasioned some dotages in Newton: and they advert particularly to his theological works. There are many theological papers of Newton which have never been published. His theological *scholium* was not inserted in the Principia until the second edition in 1713, after the loss of his papers. Brewster combats these inferences of the French mathematicians.

A melancholy instance of dotage occurs in the life of one of our most eminent dramatists, Ben Jonson. His quarrel with Inigo Jones, on account of his putting his own name first in the publication of a masque; his treatment by the Court, and by the aldermen of London, and his supplicatory letter, now in the British Museum, addressed to the Duke of Newcastle (which contains a curious story about taming a fox for his amusement) have been noticed in the Aviary. His play of the *New Inn*, one of the first after his attack of palsy, was like the Archbishop of Grenada's Homily, of which, we have mentioned, it was said "il sent l'apoplexie"—Jonson could not restrain his feelings on the occasion, but published an ode commencing thus,



Come, leave the lothed stage,  
And the more lothsome age.

This produced an attack from Feltham, beginning thus,

Come, leave this angry way,  
Of baiting those that pay  
Dear for the sight of your declining wit.

Randolph wrote a poem in defence of Jonson, being thus,

Come, do not leave the stage,  
'Cause 'tis a lothsome age.

Carew may be thought to have written very sensibly on this occasion. His epistle contains the following lines applicable to our subject :

'Tis true (dear Ben) thy just chastising hand  
Hath fixed upon the sotted age a brand  
To their sworn pride, and empty scribbling due;  
It can nor judge, nor write. And, yet, 'tis true  
Thy comic muse from the exalted line  
Touched by the *alchemist*, doth since decline  
From that her zenith, and foretells a red  
And blushing evening, when she goes to bed,  
Yet such as shall outshine the glimmering light  
With which all stars shall gild the following night.  
Why should the follies then of this dull age  
Draw from thy pen such an immodest rage?  
The wiser world doth greater thee confess  
Than all men else, than thyself only less.

Dryden, in one of those essays which by many are considered the best specimens of English composition, exhibits Ben Jonson in his *Zenith*, and hints at his *evening* lucubrations. "As for Jonson, if we look upon him while he was himself (*for his last plays were but his dotages*.) I think him the most learned and judicious writer which any theatre ever had. He was a

most severe judge of himself as well as others. One cannot say he wanted wit, but rather was frugal of it. In his works you find little to retrench or alter. Wit, and language, and humor also in some measure, we had before him; but something of art was wanting to the drama till he came. He managed his strength to more advantage than any who preceded him. You seldom find him making love in any of his scenes, or endeavouring to move the passions; his genius was too sullen and saturnine to do it gracefully, especially when he knew he came after those who had performed both to such a height. Humor was his proper sphere; and, in that, he delighted most to represent mechanic people. He was deeply conversant with the ancients both Greek and Latin, and he borrowed boldly from them. But he has done his robberies so openly, that one may see he fears not to be taxed by any law. He invades authors like a monarch, and what would be theft in other poets, is only victory in him, &c."

A similar tribute to Jonson's meridian talents, with a notice of their setting occurs in the very interesting account which Lord Clarendon has left us of his early associates among the lawyers and poets. The incidental notice of Cowley will be thought curious. It may be coupled with the notice of Milton by Waller, and the want of noticing him by Sir W. Temple.

"Ben Jonson's name can never be forgotten, having by his very good learning, and the severity of his nature and manners, very much reformed the stage, and, indeed, the English poetry itself. His natural advantages were judgment to order and govern fancy, rather than excess of fancy, his productions being slow and upon deliberation, yet abounding with great wit and fancy, and will live accordingly. And, surely, as he did exceedingly exalt the English language in eloquence,

propriety, and masculine expressions, so he was the best judge of, and fittest to prescribe rules to poetry and poets of any man who had lived with, or before him, or since, if Mr. Cowley had not made a *flight beyond all men*, with that modesty yet, to ascribe much of this to the example and learning of Ben Jonson. His conversation was very good and with the men of most note. He had for many years an extraordinary kindness for Mr. Hyde, till he found he betook himself to business, which he believed ought never to be preferred before his company. He lived to be very old, and till the palsy made a deep impression on his body and mind."

A remarkable view of the effects of age may be taken from the lives of players. It is rarely optional with them to continue on the stage when their faculties, strength, or animal spirits begin to wane—when they cease to please, they cease to be engaged, and their occupation is gone.

And, first, concerning the age of Betterton, whose fame is not eclipsed even by that of Garrick. He was a principal performer after the restoration of the monarchy, which was attended by restoration of the theatres. He performed with great applause when he was seventy-five years of age; his death, which occurred three days after his performance in one of his favorite characters, Melantius, in the Maids tragedy, is supposed to have been hastened by his exertions. He died in 1710, having acted in four reigns, besides clandestinely under the Commonwealth. Colley Cibber, who was made Poet Laureat in 1730, performed in 1745 when upwards of seventy-four years of age, in the character of Pandulph, in his own drama called *Papal Tyranny*; founded on Shakspeare's play of King John. But his *forte* had always been that of acting feeble old men. He lived to the age of eighty-six. Quin

after his retirement from the stage, used to come annually from Bath and leave his John-Dories to act *Falstaff* for the *benefit* of a friend till he had reached the age of sixty-one; he then wrote that he had lost several of his teeth from age, and would “*whistle Falstaff* for no man.” He lived to the age of seventy-three. Garrick took leave of the stage after acting Don Felix, in the *Wonder*, at the age of sixty. He lived three years afterwards. King, who was celebrated for acting the characters of Lord Ogleby and Sir P. Teazle, performed the latter at the age of seventy-two. Kemble acted at the age of sixty, and Mrs. Siddons at that of sixty-one.

The most melancholy instance of an actor attempting to sustain a character, in which he had been eminently successful, after the decay of his faculties, occurred in the instance of Macklin. He had reformed the character of Shylock from the low buffoonery with which the usage of the stage had invested it, and merited, by his conception of it, the exclamation of Pope “This is the Jew, whom Shakspeare drew.” In the year 1789, he attempted Shylock for his own benefit. He had then been certainly sixty-four years on the London stage, and, according to his own statement ninety-two years of age; though there is evidence to shew that he was in fact one hundred and two. Macklin having dressed himself with his usual accuracy, went into the green room, and coming up to Mrs. Pope, said “My dear, are you to play to-night?” “To be sure I am, don’t you see I am dressed for Portia.”—“But who is to play Shylock?” “Why you are, are you not dressed for the part?” He put his hand up to his forehead, and said “God help me! my memory has, I fear left me.” He went upon the stage and delivered two or three speeches, but did not appear

to understand what he was repeating—he, however, rallied for a short time, and after delivering a few sentences with the energy of former days, he paused, and looking helplessly around said—“ I can do no more”—and retired. He lived eight years afterwards ; and went every night to the Pit, where the public always reserved his place, on the centre of the bench immediately behind the orchestra, however crowded the house might be.

Having witnessed the desolating effects of old age in modern instances it may be interesting to notice how persons living in very ancient times have been overladen with the burden of years. There is a curious narrative in 2 Sam. ch. xx.—A person of the name of Barzillai had conducted David over the river Jordan—“ Now Barzillai was a very aged man, even *fourscore* years old : and he had provided the King sustenance when he lay at Mahanaim ; for he was a very great man. And the King said unto Barzillai, come thou over with me, and I will feed thee with me in Jerusalem. And Barzillai said unto the King, How long have I to live, that I should go up with the King unto Jerusalem ? I am this day *fourscore* years old ; and can I discern between good and evil ? Can thy servant taste what I eat or what I drink ? Can I hear any more the voice of the singing men or singing women ? Wherefore therefore should thy servant be yet a burden to my lord the King ?” In the end a friend of Barzillai goes in his stead with the king to Jerusalem.

The advance of age appears to have materially affected the mind of David himself. It is stated that one Shimei had cursed him ; but he declared, at the time, that he knew “ the Lord had bidden Shimei” to do so, and therefore that he felt no resentment against Shimei personally. Nevertheless, such



was the effect of age upon his memory and temper, that, in his dying injunctions to Solomon, he says, "Behold thou hast with thee Shimei who cursed me with a grievous curse; but he came down to meet me at Jordan, and I swore to him by the Lord, saying, I will not put thee to death by the *sword*. Now, therefore, hold him not guiltless, for thou art a *wise* man, and knowest what thou oughtest to do unto him; but his hoar head bring thou down to the grave with blood." In point of fact the King's oath to Shimei was "Thou shalt not die." So Solomon, though he was endowed with wisdom by a miraculous interposition of Providence, yet "it came to pass, when Solomon was old, his wives (700 in number, besides 300 concubines) turned away his heart after other gods," and accordingly the last acts of his life consisted in building altars and sacrificing to Idols.

Let us revert, however, from these particular instances, to considerations less painful although more general. On the aggravations of poverty, when occurring in conjunction with old age, we have an anonymous poem, which must be coupled with the school reminiscences of most readers; it has considerable merit in simplicity and pathos. It is so well known that it will be sufficient to cite two stanzas.

Pity the sorrows of a poor old man,  
Whose trembling limbs have borne him to your door,  
Whose days are dwindled to the shortest spar,  
Oh give relief, and Heaven will bless your store !

These tattered clothes my poverty bespeak,  
These hoary locks proclaim my lengthen'd years,  
And many a furrow in my grief-worn cheek,  
Has been the channel to a flood of tears.

On this subject of beggary and age combined we have the description of the Monk in Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*.

“ A poor Monk of the order of St. Francis came into the room to beg something for his convent. The moment I cast my eyes upon him, I was pre-determined not to give him a single sous, and accordingly I put my purse into my pocket—buttoned it up—set myself a little more upon my centre, and advanced up gravely to him : there was something, I fear, forbidding in my look ; I have his figure this moment before my eyes, and think there was that in it which deserved better. The Monk, as I judge from the break in his tonsure, a few scattered white hairs upon his temples being all that remained of it, might be about seventy—but from his eyes, and that sort of fire which was in them, which seemed more tempered by courtesy than years, could be no more than sixty—truth might lie between, he was certainly sixty-five ; and the general air of his countenance, notwithstanding something seemed to have been planting wrinkles in it before their time, agreed to the account. It was one of those heads which Guido has often painted—mild—pale—penetrating, free from all common-place ideas of fat, contented ignorance, looking downwards upon the earth—it looked forwards ; but looked as if it looked at something beyond this world. How one of his order came by it, Heaven above, who let it fall upon a Monk’s shoulders, best knows ; but it would have suited a Bramin, and had I met it upon the plains of Indostan, I had revered it. The rest of his outline may be given in a few strokes ; one might put it into the hands of any one to design, for ’twas neither elegant nor otherwise, but as character and expression made it so : it was a thin, spare form, something above the common size, if it lost not the distinction by a bend forwards in the figure—but it was the attitude of entreaty ; and as it now stands present to my imagination, it gained more than it lost by it.

“When he had entered the room three paces, he stood still; and laying his left hand upon his breast (a slender white staff with which he journeyed being in his right)—when I had got close up to him, he introduced himself with the little story of the wants of his convent, and the poverty of his order—and did it with so simple a grace—and such an air of deprecation was there in the whole cast of his look and figure—I was bewitched not to have been struck with it. A better reason was, I had pre-determined not to give him a single sous. ’Tis very true, said I, replying to a cast upwards with his eyes, with which he had concluded his address—’tis very true—and heaven be their resource who have no other but the charity of the world, the stock of which, I fear, is no way sufficient for the many great claims which are hourly made upon it. As I pronounced the words ‘great claims’ he gave a slight glance with his eye downwards upon the sleeve of his tunic—I felt the full force of the appeal—I acknowledged it, said I—a coarse habit, and that but once in three years, with meagre diet—are no great matters: and the true point of pity is, as they can be earned in the world with so little industry, that your order should wish to procure them by pressing upon a fund which is the property of the lame, the blind, the aged, and the infirm: the captive, who lies down counting over and over again the days of his affliction, languishes also for his share of it; and had you been of the order of Mercy, instead of the order of St. Francis, poor as I am, continued I, pointing at my portmanteau, full cheerfully should it have been opened to you for the ransom of the unfortunate. The Monk made me a bow—but of all others, resumed I, the unfortunate of our own country, surely, have the first rights; and I have left thousands in distress upon

our own shore. The Monk gave a cordial wave with his head—as much as to say, no doubt, there is misery enough in every corner of the world, as well as within our convent.—But we distinguish, said I, laying my hand upon the sleeve of his tunic, in return for his appeal—we distinguish, my good father! betwixt those who wish only to eat the bread of their own labour—and those who eat the bread of other people's, and have no other plan in life, but to get through it in sloth and ignorance, for the love of God. The poor Franciscan made no reply: a hectic of a moment passed across his cheek, but could not tarry. Nature seemed to have had done with her resentments in him; he shewed none—but letting his staff fall within his arm, he pressed both his hands with resignation upon his breast, and retired. My heart smote me the moment he shut the door—Psha! said I, with an air of carelessness, three several times—but it would not do; every ungracious syllable I had uttered crowded back into my imagination; I reflected I had no right over the poor Franciscan but to deny him; and that the punishment of that was enough to the disappointed, without the addition of unkind language—I considered his grey hairs,—his courteous figure seemed to re-enter, and gently ask me what injury he had done me? and why I could use him thus? I would have given twenty livres for an advocate. I have behaved very ill, said I within myself; but I have only just set out upon my travels; and shall learn better manners as I get along.”

We have some curious particulars concerning Sterne from his valet La Fleur, who accompanied him in his travels, and survived him. La Fleur says, that he never saw Sterne exhibit any particular sympathy for Monks; he remembered several pressing in upon him, to all of whom his answer was the

same—Mon père, je suis occupé. Je suis pauvre comme vous. He acknowledged the truth of what Sterne said of his valet. The stories of the *Grisette* and of the *Dead Ass* were true ; so was that of *Poor Maria*. “ When we came up to her,” said La Fleur, “ she was grovelling in the road like an infant, and throwing the dust upon her head—and yet few were more lovely. Upon Sterne’s accosting her with tenderness, and raising her in his arms, she collected herself, and resumed some composure—told her tale of misery, and wept upon his breast—my master sobbed aloud. I saw her gently disengage herself from his arms, and she sung him the service to the Virgin. My poor master covered his face with his hands, and walked by her side to the cottage where she lived ; then he talked earnestly to the old woman. Every day while we stayed there, I carried them meat and drink from the hotel, and when we departed from Moulines, my master left his blessing and some money with the mother ; how much, I know not : he always gave more than he could afford.

On the subject of another of the evils, to which, according to Johnson’s representation, old people are subject, *Legacy-hunting*, we have a curious imputation cast upon one of our poets by Lady M. W. Montague—“ Pope courted with the utmost assiduity all the old men from whom he could hope a legacy. The Duke of Buckingham, Lord Petersham, Sir G. Kneller, Lord Bolinbroke, Mr. Wycherley, Mr. Congreve, Lord Harcourt and others ; and I do not doubt projected to sweep the Dean’s whole inheritance, if he could have persuaded him to throw up his deanery, and come and die in his house. His general preaching against money was meant to induce people to throw it away, that he might pick it up.” Probably there is little more in this than an effusion of malevolence after her



quarrel with Pope. Her ladyship in another letter expresses herself with much aristocratic disdain both of Dean Swift and Pope. "It is pleasant to consider that had it not been for the good nature of these very mortals they condemn, these two superior beings were entitled by their birth and hereditary fortune to be only a couple of *link-boys*."

Legacy-hunting is treated of in a variety of amusing forms by the Roman poets, particularly by Juvenal and Martial; but, perhaps, there is nothing in literature superior upon this subject, to Ben Jonson's celebrated play of *Volpone*, or the *Fox*.

(One knocks without.)

*Volp.* Who's that? Away, look, Mosca; fool, begone.

*Mos.* 'Tis Signior Voltore, the advocate,

I know him by his knock.

*Volp.* Fetch me my gown,

My furs, and night-caps; say, my couch is changing:

And let him entertain himself awhile

Without i' th' gallery. Now, now, my clients

Begin their visitation! Vulture, kite,

Raven, and gorcrow, all my birds of prey,

That think me turning carcass, now they come;

I am not for 'em yet. How now? the news?

*Mos.* A piece of plate, Sir.

*Volp.* Of what bigness?

*Mos.* Huge,

Massy, and antique, with your name inscrib'd,

And arms engraven.

*Volp.* Good! and not a fox

Stretcht on the earth, with fine delusive slights

Mocking a gaping crow? ha, Mosca?

*Mos.* Sharp, Sir.

*Volp.* Give me my furs. Why dost thou laugh so, man ?

*Mos.* I cannot chuse, Sir, when I apprehend  
What thoughts he has (without) now, as he walks :  
That this might be the last gift he should give ;  
That this would fetch you ; if you die to-day,  
And gave him all, what he should be to-morrow,  
What large return would come of all his ventures.  
How he should worshipp'd be, and revered ;  
Ride with his furs, and foot-clothes ; waited on  
By herds of fools, and clients ; have clear way  
Made for his moile, as letter'd as himself ;  
Be call'd the great and learned advocate :  
And then concludes, there's nought impossible.

*Volp.* Yes, to be learned, Mosca.

*Mos.* O, no : rich  
Implies it. Hood an ass with reverend purple,  
So you can hide his two ambitious ears,  
And he shall pass for a cathedral doctor.

*Volp.* My caps, my caps, good Mosca ; fetch him in.

*Mos.* Stay, Sir, your ointment for your eyes.

*Volp.* That's true ;

Dispatch, dispatch : I long to have possession  
Of my new present.

*Mos.* That, and thousands more,  
I hope to see you lord of.

*Volp.* Loving Mosca,  
'Tis well, my pillow now, and let him enter.  
Now my feign'd cough, my phthisick, and my gout,  
My apoplexy, palsy and catarrh,  
Help, with your forced functions, this my posture,

Wherein this three year, I have milk'd their hopes.  
He comes, I hear him (uh, uh, uh, uh) O.

## SCENE III.

*Mosca, Voltore, Volpone.*

*Mos.* Sir, Signior Voltore is come, this morning  
To visit you.

*Volp.* I thank him.

*Mos.* And hath brought  
A piece of antique plate, bought of St. Mark,  
With which he here presents you.

*Volp.* He is welcome.

Pray him to come more often.

*Volt.* How fare you, Sir ?

*Volp.* I thank you, Signior Voltore,  
Where is the plate ? mine eyes are bad.

*Volt.* I'm sorry,  
To see you still thus weak.

*Mos.* That he's not weaker. (*aside*)

*Volp.* You are too munificent.

*Volt.* No, Sir, would to heaven,  
I could as well give health to you as that plate.

*Volp.* You give, Sir, what you can. I thank you. Your love  
Hath taste in this, and shall not be unanswer'd.

I pray you see me often.

*Volt.* Yes, I shall, Sir.

*Volp.* Be not far from me.

*Mos.* Do you observe that, Sir ?

*Volp.* Hearken unto me still : it will concern you.

*Mos.* You are a happy man, Sir, know your good.

*Volp.* I cannot now last long—

*Mos.* You are his heir, Sir.

*Volt.* Am I?

*Volp.* I feel me going, (uh, uh, uh, uh.)  
I'm sailing to my port, (uh, uh, uh, uh.)

And I am glad I am so near my haven.

*Mos.* Alas, kind gentleman, well, we must all go—

*Volt.* But, Mosca—

*Mos.* Age will conquer.

*Volt.* 'Pray thee, hear me.

Am I inscribed his heir for certain?

*Mos.* Are you?

I do beseech you, Sir, you will vouchsafe  
To write me i' your family. All my hopes  
Depend upon your worship. I am lost,  
Except the rising sun do shine on me.

*Volt.* It shall both shine, and warm thee, Mosca.

*Mos.* Sir,

I am a man, that hath not done your love  
All the worst offices; here I wear your keys,  
See all your coffers, and your caskets lockt,  
Keep the poor inventory of your jewels,  
Your plate and moneys, am your steward, Sir,  
Husband your goods here.

*Volt.* But am I sole heir?

*Mos.* Without a partner, Sir, confirm'd this morning;  
The wax is warm yet, and the ink scarce dry  
Upon the parchment.

*Volt.* Happy, happy, me!

By what good chance, sweet Mosca?

*Mos.* Your desert, Sir,

I know no second cause.

*Volt.* Thy modesty

Is loth to know it ; well, we shall requite it.

*Mos.* He ever lik'd your course, Sir, that first took him.  
I oft have heard him say, how he admir'd  
Men of your large profession, that could speak  
To every cause, and things mere contraries,  
Till they were hoarse again, yet all be law ;  
That, with most quick agility, could turn,  
And return ; make knots, and undo them ;  
Give forked counsel ; take provoking gold  
On either hand, and put it up ; these men,  
He knew, would thrive with their humility.  
And (for his part) he thought he should be blest  
To have his heir of such a suffering spirit,  
So wise, so grave, of so perplex'd a tongue,  
And loud withal, that would not wag nor scarce  
Lie still, without a fee ; when every word  
Your worship but lets fall, is a cecchine !

(Another knocks.)

Who's that ? one knocks, I would not have you seen, Sir,  
And yet—pretend you came, and went in haste ;  
I'll fashion an excuse. And, gentle, Sir,  
When you do come to swim in golden lard,  
Up to the arms in honey, that your chin  
Is borne up stiff, with fatness of the flood,  
Think on your vassal ; but remember me :  
I ha' not been your worst of clients.

*Volt.* Mosca,—

*Mos.* When will you have your inventory brought, Sir ?  
Or see a copy of the will ? Anon



I'll bring 'em to you, Sir. Away, begone,  
Put business i' your face.

*Volt.* Excellent Mosca !

Come hither, let me kiss thee. (Departs.)

*Mos.* Keep you still, Sir.  
Here is Corbaccio.

*Volp.* Set the plate away,  
The vulture's gone, and the old raven's come !

SCENE IV.

*Mosca, Corbaccio, Volpone.*

*Mos.* Betake you to your silence, and your sleep.—  
Stand there and multiply.—Now shall we see.  
A wretch who is (indeed) more impotent,  
Than this can feign to be ; yet hopes to hop  
Over his grave. Signior Corbaccio !  
You're very welcome, Sir.

*Corb.* How does your patron ?

*Mos.* Troth, as he did, Sir ; no amends.

*Corb.* What ? *mends* he ?

*Mos.* No, Sir : he's rather worse.

*Corb.* That's well. Where is he ?

*Mos.* Upon this couch, Sir, newly fall'n asleep.

*Corb.* Does he sleep well ?

*Mos.* No wink, Sir, all this night,  
Nor yesterday ; but slumbers.

*Corb.* Good ! he should take  
Some counsel of Physicians : I have brought him  
An opiate here, from mine own doctor—

*Mos.* He will not hear of drugs.

*Corb.* Why? I myself  
Stood by, while it was made, saw all the ingredients  
And know, it cannot but most gently work.  
My life for his, 'tis but to make him sleep.

*Volp.* I, his last sleep, if he would take it. (*Aside.*)

*Mos.* Sir,  
He has no faith in physick.

*Corb.* 'Say you, say you?

*Mos.* He has no faith in physick: he does think  
Most of your doctors are the greater danger,  
And worse disease, to escape. I often have  
Heard him protest, that your physician  
Should never be his heir.

*Corb.* Not I his heir?

*Mos.* Not your physician, Sir.

*Corb.* O, no, no, no,  
I do not mean it,

*Mos.* No, Sir, nor their fees  
He cannot brook: he says, they flay a man,  
Before they kill him.

*Corb.* Right, I do conceive you.

*Mos.* And then they do it by experiment;  
For which the law not only doth absolve 'em,  
But gives them great reward: and he is loth  
To hire his death, so.

*Corb.* It is true, they kill,  
With as much license, as a judge.

*Mos.* Nay, more;  
For he but kills, Sir, when the law condemns,  
And these can kill him too.

*Corb.* I, or me;

Or any man. How does his apoplex ?

Is that strong on him still ?

*Mos.* Most violent.

His speech is broken, and his eyes are set,

His face drawn longer, than 'twas wont—

*Corb.* How ? How ?

*Stronger* than he was wont ?

*Mos.* No, Sir : his face

Drawn *longer* than 'twas wont.

*Corb.* O good.

*Mos.* His mouth

Is ever gaping, and his eyelids hang.

*Corb.* Good.

*Mos.* A freezing numbness stiffens all his joints,

And makes the colour of his flesh like lead.

*Corb.* 'Tis good.

*Mos.* His pulse beats slow, and dull.

*Corb.* Good symptoms still.

*Mos.* And from his brain—

*Corb.* I conceive you, (good.)

*Mos.* Flows a cold sweet, with a continual rheum,

Forth the resolved corners of his eyes.

*Corb.* Is 't possible ? Yet I am better, ha !

How does he, with the swimming of his head ?

*Mos.* O, Sir, 'tis past the scotomy ; he now

Hath lost his feeling, and hath left to snort :

You hardly can perceive him, that he breathes.

*Corb.* Excellent, excellent, sure I shall outlast him ;

This makes me young again, a score of years.

*Mos.* I was a coming for you, Sir.

*Corb.* Has he made his will ?

What has he given me ?

*Mos.* No, Sir.

*Corb.* Nothing ? Ha ?

*Mos.* He has not made his will, Sir.

*Corb.* Oh, oh, oh,

What then did Voltore, the lawyer, here ?

*Mos.* He smelt a carcass, Sir, when he but heard  
My master was about his testament ;

As I did urge him to it for your good—

*Corb.* He came unto him, did he ? I thought so.

*Mos.* Yes, and presented him this piece of plate.

*Corb.* To be his heir ?

*Mos.* I do not know, Sir.

*Corb.* True.

I know it though.

*Mos.* By your own scale, Sir.

*Corb.* Well,

I shall prevent him, yet. See Mosca, look,  
Here, I have brought a bag of bright cecchines,  
Will quite weigh down his plate.

*Mos.* Yea, marry, Sir.

This is true physick, this your sacred medicine ;  
No talk of opiates, to this great elixir.

*Corb.* 'Tis aurum palpabile, if not potabile.

*Mos.* It shall be minister'd to him, in his bowl ?

*Corb.* I, do, do, do.

*Mos.* Most blessed cordial.

This will recover him.

*Corb.* Yes, do, do, do.

*Mos.* I think it were not best, Sir,

*Corb.* What ?

*Mos.* To recover him.

*Corb.* O, no, no, no ; by no means.

*Mos.* Why, Sir, this

Will work some strange effect, if he but feel it.

*Corb.* 'Tis true, therefore forbear, I'll take my venture ;  
Give me it again.

*Mos.* At no hand ; pardon me ;  
You shall not do yourself that wrong, Sir. I  
Will so advise you, you shall have it all.

*Corb.* How ?

*Mos.* All, Sir, 'tis your right, your own, no man  
Can claim a part : 'tis yours without a rival,  
Decreed by destiny.

*Corb.* How ; how, good Mosca ?

*Mos.* I'll tell you, Sir. This fit he shall recover.

*Corb.* I do conceive you.

*Mos.* And, on first advantage  
Of his gain'd sense, will I re-importune him  
Unto the making of his testament :  
And shew him this.

*Corb.* Good, good,

*Mos.* 'Tis better yet,  
If you will hear, Sir.

*Corb.* Yes, with all my heart.

*Mos.* Now, would I counsel you, make home with speed,  
There, frame a will ; whereto you shall inscribe  
My master *your* sole heir.

*Corb.* And disinherit  
My son ?

*Mos.* O, Sir, the better : for that colour  
Shall make it much more taking.



*Corb.* O, but colour ?

*Mos.* This will, Sir, you shall send it unto me,  
Now, when I come to inforce (as I will do)  
Your cares, your watchings, and your many prayers,  
Your more than many gifts, your this day's present,  
And last, produce your will ; where, (without thought,  
Or least regard, unto your proper issue,  
A son so brave, and highly meriting,)  
The stream of your diverted love hath thrown you  
Upon my master, and made him your heir :  
He cannot be so stupid, or stone-dead,  
But out of conscience, and mere gratitude—

*Corb.* He must pronounce me his ?

*Mos.* 'Tis true.

*Corb.* This plot  
Did I think on before.

*Mos.* I do believe it.

*Corb.* Do you not believe it ?

*Mos.* Yes, Sir.

*Corb.* Mine own project.

*Mos.* Which, when he hath done, Sir—

*Corb.* Publish'd me his heir ?

*Mos.* And you so certain to survive him—

*Corb.* I.

*Mos.* Being so lusty a man—

*Corb.* 'Tis true,

*Mos.* Yes, Sir.—

*Corb.* I thought on that too ; see how he should be  
The very organ to express my thoughts !

*Mos.* You have not only done yourself a good—

*Corb.* But multiplied it on my son.

*Mos.* I do desire your worship to make haste, Sir.

*Corb.* 'Tis done, 'tis done, I go. (*Departs.*)

*Volp.* O, I shall burst :

Let out my sides, let out my sides—

*Mos.* Contain

Your flux of laughter, Sir : you know this hope

Is such a bait, it covers any hook.

*Volp.* O, but thy working, and thy placing it !

I cannot hold ; good rascal, let me kiss thee :

I never knew thee in so rare a humour.

*Mos.* Alas, Sir, I but do as I am taught ;

Follow your grave instructions ; give 'em words ;

Pour oil into their ears, and send them hence.

*Volp.* 'Tis true, 'tis true. What a rare punishment  
Is avarice to itself ?

*Mos.* I, with our help, Sir.

*Volp.* So many cares, so many maladies,  
So many fears attending on old age,  
Yea, death so often call'd on, as no wish  
Can be more frequent with 'em, their limbs faint,  
Their senses dull, their seeing, hearing going,  
All dead before them ; yea, their very teeth,  
Their instruments of eating, failing them :  
Yet this is reckon'd life ! nay, here was one,  
Is now gone home, that wishes to live longer !  
Feels not his gout, nor palsie, feigns himself  
Younger by scores of years, flatters his age,  
With confident belying it, hopes he may,  
With charms like *Æson*, have his youth restor'd ;  
And with these thoughts so battens, as if fate  
Would be as easily cheated on, as he,

And all turns air ! Who's that there, now ? a third ?

(Another knocks.)

*Mos.* Close to your couch again : I hear his voice  
It is Corvino, our spruce merchant.

SCENE V.

*Mosca, Corvino, Volpone.*

*Mos.* Signior Corvino ! come most wisht for ! O,  
How happy were you, if you knew it, now !

*Corv.* Why ? what ? wherein ?

*Mos.* The tardy hour is come, Sir.

*Corv.* He is not dead ?

*Mos.* Not dead, Sir, but as good ;

He knows no man.

*Corv.* How shall I do then ?

*Mos.* Why, Sir ?

*Corv.* I have brought him here a pearl.

*Mos.* Perhaps he has

So much remembrance left, as to know you, Sir,

He still calls on you ; nothing but your name

Is in his mouth ; is your pearl orient, Sir ?

*Corv.* Venice was never owner of the like.

*Volp.* Signior Corvino.

*Mos.* Hark.

*Volp.* Signior Corvino.

*Mos.* Hark.

*Volp.* Signior Corvino.

*Mos.* He calls you. Step and give it him. He's here, Sir,  
And he has brought you a rich pearl.

*Corv.* How do you, Sir ?

Tell him it doubles the twelfth caract.

*Mos.* Sir,  
He cannot understand, his hearing's gone,  
And yet it comforts him to see you—

*Corv.* Say  
I have a diamond for him too.

*Mos.* Best shew't, Sir,  
Put it into hand ; 'tis only there  
He apprehends : he has his feelings, yet.  
See how he grasps it !

*Corv.* 'Las, good gentleman !  
How pitiful the sight is !

*Mos.* Tut, forget, Sir.  
The weeping of an heir should still be laughter,  
Under a visor.

*Corv.* Why ? am I his heir ?

*Mos.* Sir, I am sworn, I may not shew the will,  
Till he be dead : but there has been Corbaccio,  
Here has been Voltore, here were others too,  
I cannot number 'em, they were so many,  
All gaping here for legacies ; but I  
Taking the vantage of his naming you,  
(Signior Corvino, Signior Corvino) took  
Paper, and pen, and ink, and here I ask'd him,  
Whom he would have his heir ! Corvino. Who  
Should be executor ? Corvino. And,  
To any question he was silent to,  
I still interpreted the nods he made  
Through weakness for consent : and sent home th' others,  
Nothing bequeath'd them, but to cry and curse.

*Corv.* O, my dear Mosca. Does he not perceive us ?  
(*They embrace.*)

*Mos.* No more than a blind harper. He knows no man,  
No face of friend, nor name of any servant,  
Who 'twas that fed him last, or gave him drink :  
Not those he hath begotten, or brought up,  
Can he remember.

*Corv.* That's well, that's well. Art sure he does not  
[hear us ?

*Mos.* Sure, Sir ? Why, look you, credit your own sense.  
(You may come near, Sir) Would you once close  
Those filthy eyes of yours, that flow with slime,  
Like two frog-pits : and those same hanging cheeks,  
Cover'd with hide instead of skin, (nay, help, Sir,)  
That look like frozen dish-clouts set on end.

*Corv.* Or like an old smok'd wall, on which the rain  
Ran down in streaks.

*Mos.* Excellent, Sir, speak out :  
You may be louder yet : a culverin  
Discharged in his ear, would hardly bore it.

*Corv.* His nose is like a common sewer, still running.

*Mos.* 'Tis, good ! And what his mouth !

*Corv.* A very draught.

*Mos.* O, stop it up.

*Corv.* By no means.

*Mos.* 'Pray you, let me.  
Faith I could stifle him rarely with a pillow,  
As well as any women that should keep him.

*Corv.* Do as you will, but I'll begone.

*Mos.* Be so ;

It is your presence makes him last so long.

*Corv.* I pray you, use no violence.

*Mos.* No, Sir ? Why ;



Why should you be thus scrupulous, 'pray you, Sir?

*Corv.* Nay at your discretion.

*Mos.* Well, good Sir, be gone.

*Corv.* I will not trouble him now, to take my pearl.

*Mos.* Puh, nor your diamond, what a needless care  
Is this afflicts you? Is not all here yours?

Am not I here? whom you have made your creature?

That owe my being to you?

*Corv.* Grateful Mosca!

Thou art my friend, my fellow, my companion,

My partner, and shall share in all my fortunes.

*Mos.* Excepting one.

*Corv.* What's that?

*Mos.* Your gallant wife, Sir. (*Corvino departs.*)

Now is he gone: we had no other means,

To shoot him hence, but this.

*Volp.* My divine Mosca!

Thou hast to-day out-gone thyself. Who's there?

(Another knocks.)

I will be troubled with no more. Prepare

Me music, dances, banquets, all delights;

The Turk is not more sensual in his pleasures,

Than will Volpone. Let me see; a pearl?

A diamond? plate? cecchines? Good morning's purchase;

Why, this is better than rob churches."

With regard to the *vices* of old age, we have a spirited view taken of them by Lord Chatham when entering on his parliamentary career, after being taunted by the elder Horace Walpole with the juvenility of his sentiments, and theatrical style of speaking.

“ Sir, the atrocious crime of being a young man, which the honorable gentleman has, with such spirit and decency, charged upon me, I shall neither attempt to palliate nor deny ; but content myself with wishing, that I may be one of those, whose follies may cease with their youth ; and not of that number, who are ignorant in spite of experience.

“ Whether youth can be imputed to any man as a reproach, I will not, Sir, assume the province of determining ; but surely, age may become justly contemptible, if the opportunities, which it brings, have passed away without improvement ; and vice appears to prevail, when the passions have subsided. The wretch that after having seen the consequences of a thousand errors, continues still to blunder ; and whose age has only added obstinacy to stupidity, is surely the object of either abhorrence or contempt, and deserves not, that his grey head should secure him from insults. Much more, Sir, is he to be abhorred who, as he has advanced in age, has receded from virtue, and becomes more wicked, with less temptation ; who prostitutes himself for money, which he cannot enjoy, and spends the remains of his life in the ruin of his country.”

*Avarice* is of all vices that which is generally regarded as most characteristic of Old Age. Thus Lord Byron—

My days of love are over ; me no more  
 The charms of maid, wife, and still less of widow,  
 Can make the fool of which they made before,  
 In short I must not lead the life I did do.  
 The credulous hope of mutual minds is o'er,  
 The copious use of claret is forbid too,  
 So for a good *old-gentlemanly vice*  
 I think I must take up with *avarice*.

The subject of the avarice of old people is dwelt upon by

Sir J. Denham (the author of Cowper's Hill) in a poem upon old age now but little read, and in which he very much follows the arrangement and thoughts in Cicero's treatise. Sir J. Denham and Waller are styled by Dryden the "Fathers" of modern English poetry, and Pope has treated a union of Denham's "strength" and Waller's "sweetness" as the perfection of fine writing. Dr. Johnson in his life of Denham has exemplified his "strength" by examples. The following lines are chiefly interesting with reference to the state of English poetry at the time they were written :

Of Age's avarice I cannot see  
 What colour, ground, or reason there should be :  
 Is it not folly, when the way we ride  
 Is short, for a long voyage to provide ?  
 To avarice some title youth may own,  
 To reap in autumn what the spring had sown ;  
 And with the providence of bees, or ants,  
 Prevent with summer's plenty, winter's wants.  
 But age scarce sows, till death stands by to reap ;  
 And to a stranger's hand transfers the heap ;  
 Afraid to be so once, she's always poor,  
 And to avoid a mischief, makes it sure.  
 Such madness as for fear of death, to die,  
 Is, to be poor, for fear of poverty.

It is not to be supposed that avaricious feelings would be so prevalent with old people, if the case merely depended on the weak considerations which Cicero and Sir J. Denham take into view. But many old people may feel, after the loss of relatives and friends, that their money is the only hold they retain on the respect and sympathy of mankind ; and that they would be incapable of repairing its deprivation. It is also natural to old men, upon this, as upon other subjects, ac-

cording to Polonius, to "cast beyond themselves in their opinions." Dr. Johnson in his *Rambler*, says, "The most usual support of old age is wealth. He whose possessions are large, and whose chests are full, if he has lost all other means of government, if his strength and his reason fail him, he can at least alter his will. And therefore all that have hopes must likewise have fears, and he may still continue to give laws to such as have not ceased to regard their own interest. This is, indeed, too frequently the *citadel of the dotard*, the last fortress to which age retires, and in which he makes a stand against the upstart race that seizes his domains, disputes his commands, and cancels his prescriptions."

In Pope's time, Sir John Cutler, of whom particular mention is made in the Epistle to Lord Bathurst, was the miser *par excellence*—he has been eclipsed by *Elwes*. This renowned miser attained the age of 80: he was possessed of £500,000. In the last year of his life he went to live in his son's house, and took with him five guineas and a half crown. One night he alarmed all the inmates with passionate exclamations that he had lost all his money: His memory in his advanced age had failed; the money was found hid in a corner behind a window shutter. In harvest time he would amuse himself with going into the fields to glean corn on the grounds of his own tenants, and they used to leave more than usual, in order to please him. He used commonly to travel on horseback, feeding himself with some hard-boiled eggs which he took in his pocket, and his horse with any hay that might be hanging on hedges. He did not commonly shoe his horse, but rode it in green lanes, alleging that the turf was pleasant to its feet. On one occasion, coming from Newmarket, he nearly occasioned the death of a tra-

velling companion, a Mr. Sparling, by inducing him on a cold and dark night to take a cut across some fields. Having with danger and difficulty got over a precipitous ditch, Mr. Sparling thanked Heaven for his escape. "Aye," said old Elwes, "you mean from the turnpike; very right, never pay a turnpike if you can avoid it!" At the age of 60 Elwes was elected Member for Berkshire, at Lord Craven's expense. In London he always took up his abode at some one of his numerous houses that might be vacant, moving from it as soon as any tenant offered. A couple of beds, a couple of chairs, a table, and an old woman, were all his furniture, and he moved them at a minute's warning. On returning from the House of Commons the persons who were acquainted with him often proposed a hackney coach; which he rejected, saying, that he preferred walking. But on overtaking him, after *they* had hired the coach, he was easily persuaded to get into it. Walking home one dark night he received a contusion on his legs from a sedan chair. Some friends insisted on an Apothecary being sent for; when he came, he expatiated on the dangerous state of his legs. Upon which Elwes proposed and made an agreement with him that he should take and doctor one leg, and himself would take and do nothing to the other, and that he would wager the Apothecary his bill, on the undoctored leg getting well first. He used often to mention, with triumph, that he beat the Apothecary by a fortnight." Elwes's mother and uncle were celebrated misers: but it would seem that he himself, until he succeeded to his uncle's property at the age of 40, mixed in all the gaities of life, was distinguished for his riding, and was much addicted to gambling. When he visited his old uncle he put on a



masquerade dress of darned worsted stockings, iron buckles, tattered waistcoat and worn-out coat.

Roger North's description of the Old Serjeant with whom Lord Guilford, when a young man, used to ride the circuit presents a somewhat more common example of covetousness in aged people. "He (the Lord Keeper, when he first went circuits) was exceeding careful to keep fair with the *cocks* of the circuit, and particularly Serjeant Earl, who had almost a monopoly. The serjeant was a very covetous man, and when none would starve with him on journies, this young gentleman kept him company. Once, at Cambridge, the serjeant's man brought young North a cake, telling him he would want it, for he knew his master would not draw bit till he came to Norwich. And it proved so. They jogged on, and, at Barton Mills, young North asked the serjeant if he would not take a mouthful there." "No, boy," said he, "we will light at every ten miles' end, and get to Norwich as soon as we can." And there was no remedy. Once he asked the serjeant in what method he kept his accounts—"for you have" said he "lands, securities, and great comings-in of all kinds." "Accounts, boy," said the serjeant, "I get as much as I can, and I spend as little as I can, and there is all the account I keep." But young North was sure to keep the serjeant's discourse flowing all the way they rode; and, being mostly of law, and tricks, and sometimes of purchases, management and the like, it was very beneficial to one who had his experience to gather."

Misers in painting, as in the well known picture of the Two Misers in Windsor Castle, and in poetry, are generally represented as old men. Pope's miser is *old*; he introduces him

as one of his instances of the "ruling passion strong in death."

"I give and I devise" (*old Euclio* said  
And sighed) "my lands and tenements to Ned."  
Your money, Sir?—"My money, Sir, what all?  
Why if I must" (then wept) "I give it Paul."  
The manor, Sir?—"The manor! hold," he cried,  
"Not that—I cannot part with that,"—and died.

The name of *Euclio* is taken from Plautus' play, which is the foundation of one of the most popular comedies of modern literature, Moliere's *Avare*. Ben Jonson has also borrowed a miser, in the play of "The case is altered," from Plautus. Moliere's *Harpagon* has again been imitated by Shadwell and Fielding. It is observable that Moliere makes his miser odious, Plautus only ridiculous. The modern misers on the stage are usually represented as in love. In the *Plutus* of Aristophanes, the plot of which play turns on giving Plutus his eyesight, the Dramatist has not singled out old people as the only persons who were slaves to their wealth. The Priest of Jupiter complains that he is beggared, for that now Plutus could see, and had made the good to be also the rich, they had left off resorting to Jupiter's temple. In like manner it is observed by Sadi in his *Gulistan*—"Dervises require not direms and dinars: when they receive money, look out for other dervises."

The anecdotes of misers, and persons evincing a strong desire for money, without the possibility of enjoying it, are endless. Most persons have read of the dying Catholic who wanted to bargain for the crucifix placed in his hands, during the ceremony of extreme unction, and many other instances which have found their way into books; the following

is mentioned, principally because I have not seen it in print, and recollect very well the person of whom it is related. An eminent Barrister, after his faculties were quite decayed, had invented for him a daily source of pleasurable excitement; sham briefs were prepared, with large fees marked upon them. These were taken to him when he seemed particularly dull.—Having been a king's counsel, it had been only usual to sign his initials and not his name under the fee; and for a considerable time before his decease this was his only pleasure in life.

With regard to *crimes* imputed to Old Age; a very serious calamity in times not very remote was that of being suspected for a *witch*. Addison and Blackstone, amongst others, have admitted their belief generally in witchcraft. And the horse-shoe (which is mentioned in *Hudibras*,) over many a cottage door in England shews that these writers are, at least, supported by opinions that are not quite extinct. In ancient times when Joseph kept a *divining cup*, supernatural agency seems to have been of very common occurrence. When Balaam is accosted by his ass, he falls into conversation with the animal, without exhibiting any surprize. St. Augustin explains this by observing that he was probably familiar with supernatural phænomena (*talibus monstris assuetus*.) And in the trial of jealousy; which was part of the code of the Jewish law, an extraordinary occurrence must have so often been witnessed as to have been scarcely deemed supernatural. “And the priest shall cause the woman to drink the bitter water that causeth the curse, &c.—And it shall come to pass, that if she be defiled, and have done trespass against her husband that the water that causeth the curse shall enter into her and become bitter, and her belly shall swell, and her thigh shall rot, &c.—This is the law of jealousies.”

Many institutions which have been referred to a divine origin are in accordance with the customs generally prevalent in the East. The Mosaical injunction, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live" has been practically enforced upon supposed witches on various occasions in the East Indies. In Macnaghten's Reports several cases occur for trials connected with this subject. In the case of Runjooah and six others in 1821, the prisoners were convicted in the Nizamut Adawlut of murdering a woman on suspicion of being a witch. A regular trial of the deceased for witchcraft appeared to have taken place in her village.—In Jugjeet Sing's case, 1822, the prisoner was the head of a village; he had a sick child whose illness he imputed to the incantations of the prosecutor's wife; he therefore confined the woman in the stocks; a few days afterwards she was found hanging by her neck to a tree. There are no less than ten decisions in the five first volumes of the Nizamut Adawlut Reports in charges of murder for killing persons on the alleged ground of being witches or sorcerers. In one of the cases, Churrun the prisoner murdered the deceased under the impression that he had transformed himself into a tiger, and carried off the prisoner's daughter. The prisoner was sentenced only to imprisonment for seven years by Mr. J. Shakspeare. This was in 1833.

The Book written by Enoch, "the seventh from Adam" as he is styled by St. Jude, and which is quoted by that Apostle, and also several of the Fathers, throws great light on the "Sons of God" mentioned in Genesis, and enumerates by name several devils. The Fathers of the Church, who, it is shown by Dr. Middleton, for several centuries, professed to work miracles and cast out devils, have added largely to the

supernatural history recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. They give us many details of the feats of Simon Magus, and Elymas the Sorcerer, as, for example, the placing of a sickle in a field of corn, the whole of which it reaped without being held by any one. Indeed in English Bibles down to a very late date, there was retained a service for the king healing the sick: I have got a copy of that service "Published by his Majesty's command" of the date 1686. It is a singular argument to have been used by so sensible a man as Sir W. Temple, in the celebrated controversy on the comparative advantages of ancient and modern learning. "What have *we* remaining of *magic*, by which the Indians, the Chaldees and Egyptians were so renowned?"

The first English statute against witchcraft was passed in the reign of Henry VIII.; it was repealed in the first year of the reign of Edward VI.—But Cranmer's Articles of Visitation, and the Articles of Visitation in Elizabeth's reign contain directions about witchcraft.—A new statute on the subject was passed in 1562; and a more severe one in the first year of King James, when it was made felony to "suckle imps."

The state of feeling which occasioned Queen Elizabeth's statute against witchcraft may be collected from a sermon preached before Her Majesty by Bishop Jewel. "Witches and sorcerers within these last few years are marvellously increased within your Grace's realm. These eyes have seen most evident and manifest marks of their wickedness. Your Grace's subjects pine away even unto the death; their color fadeth, their flesh rotteth, their speech is benumbed, their senses are bereft. Wherefore your poor subjects' most humble petition to your Highness is, that the laws touching such



malefactors may be put into execution. For the shoal of them is great, their doing horrible, their malice intolerable, the examples most miserable. And I pray God they never practise further than upon the *subject*."

King James wrote a book on Dæmonology, which, in the preface, he says, he undertook on account of the "fearful abounding of those slaves of the Devil, witches and enchanters." Lord Bacon, in his natural history, relates without comment that "the ointment which witches use is reported to be made from the fat of children digged out of their graves." Among early legal notices of witchcraft are the proceedings connected with the poisoning of Overbury by the Duke and Duchess of Somerset, the trials of the Lancashire witches of Pendleton forest in 1612, and the sanguinary assizes held by Hopkins, "the witch-finder," during the time of the Commonwealth. Hopkins was at last thrown into the water himself by the infuriated populace, with his toes and fingers tied together, after the manner of a suspected witch.

The trial of witches which has, perhaps, excited most attention is that of two old women, Amy Denny and Rose Cullender, in 1664, at Bury before Ch. B. Hale. There was a great deal of ridiculous evidence about vomiting pins and nails, and about a waggon stopping fast in a gateway, though the posts did not come in contact with it. After hearing the evidence Hale asked Sir John Brown, author of the work on *Vulgar Errors*, what were his thoughts upon what had transpired in court? Sir J. Brown gave it as his opinion that the children *were bewitched*, and mentioned that some witches had been recently detected in Denmark, whose practices were similar to those spoken to by the witnesses. Hale would not sum up, for fear he should put a gloss of

his own upon any part of the evidence. He said, however, that the Scriptures had left no doubt that there was such a thing as witchcraft. The two old women were hanged a week after the trial.

In Roger North's life of Lord Keeper Guildford we have some interesting accounts of the trials of witches, which may be thought to afford the best insight which we can obtain into the real nature of such trials. "In trials of some criminals, whose cases proved very obscure, or doubtful, as to such especially if they were capital, he was infinitely scrupulous; but never more puzzled than when a popular cry was at the heels of a business; for then he had his jury to deal with, and if he did not tread upon eggs, they would conclude sinistrously, and be apt to find against his opinion. And, for this reason, he dreaded the trying of a witch. It is seldom that a poor old wretch is brought to trial upon that account, but there is, at the heels of her, a popular rage that does little less than demand her to be put to death: and, if a judge is so clear and open as to declare against that impious vulgar opinion, that the devil himself has power to torment and kill innocent children, or that he is pleased to divert himself with the good people's cheese, butter, pigs, and geese, and the like errors of the ignorant and foolish rabble; the countrymen, (the triers) cry this judge hath no religion, for he doth not believe witches; and so, to shew they have some, hang the poor wretches. All which tendency to mistake requires a very prudent and moderate carriage in a judge, whereby to convince rather by detecting of the fraud, than by denying authoritatively such power to be given to old women.

"His Lordship was somewhat more thoughtful upon t is subject; because that, in the year in which Mr. Justice Ray-

mond was his co-judge in that circuit, two old women were hurried out of the country to be tried at Exeter for witchcraft; and the city rang with tales of their preternatural exploits, as the current of such tattle useth to overflow. Nay, they went so far as to say that the judges' horses were at a stand, and could not draw the coach up the Castle-lane: all which the common sort firmly believed. It fell out that Raymond sat on the crown side there, which freed his lordship of the care of such trials. But he had really a concern upon him at what happened; which was that his brother Raymond's passive behaviour should let those poor women die. The cases were so far clear, viz. that the old women confessed, and owned in court, that they were witches. These were two miserable old creatures, that, one may say, as to sense or understanding, were scarce alive; but were overwhelmed with melancholy, and waking dreams, and so stupid as no one could suppose they knew either the construction or consequence of what they said. All the rest of the evidence was trifling. I sitting in the court the next day, took up the file of informations, taken by the justices, which were laid out upon the table, and against one of the old women, read thus:—"this informant saith, he 'saw a cat leap in at her (the old woman's) window, when it was twilight;' " and this "informant further saith, that he verily believeth the said cat to be the devil, and more saith not." The judge made no nice distinctions, as how possible it was for old women, in a sort of melancholy madness, by often thinking in pain, and want of spirits, to contract an opinion of themselves that was false; and that their confession ought not to be taken against themselves, without a plain evidence that it was rational and sensible, no more than that of a lunatic, or

distracted person, but he left the point upon the evidence fairly (as they called it) to the jury, and they convicted them both, as I remember ; but one most certainly was hanged.

“ The first circuit his lordship went westward, Mr. Justice Rainsford, who had gone former circuits there, went with him ; and he said that, the year before, a witch was brought to Salisbury, and tried before him. Sir James Long came to his chamber, and made a heavy complaint of this witch, and said that if she escaped, his estate would not be worth any thing ; for all the people would go away. It happened that the witch was acquitted, and the knight continued extremely concerned ; therefore the judge, to save the poor gentleman’s estate, ordered the woman to be kept in gaol and that the town should allow her 2s. 6d. per week ; for which he was very thankful. The very next assizes, he came to the judge to desire his lordship would let her come back to the town. And why ? They could keep her for 1s. 6d. there, and in the gaol, she cost them a shilling more.

“ His lordship had not the good fortune of escaping all business of that kind ; for at Taunton-Dean he was forced to try an old man for a wizard ; and, for the curiosity of observing the state of a male witch or wizard, I attended in the Court, and sat near where the poor man stood. The evidence against him was, the having bewitched a girl of about thirteen years old : for she had strange and unaccountable fits and used to cry out upon him, and spit out of her mouth straight pins, and whenever the man was brought near her, she fell in her fits, and spit forth straight pins. His Lordship wondered at the *straight* pins, which could not be so well couched in the mouth as crooked ones ; for such only used to be spit out by people bewitched. He examined the witnesses very ten-

derly and carefully, and so as none could collect what his opinion was; for he was fearful of the jurymen's precipitancy, if he gave them any offence. When the poor man was told he must answer for himself, he entered upon a defence as orderly and well expressed as I ever heard spoke by any man, counsel, or other; and if the attorney-general had been his advocate I am sure he would not have done it more sensibly. The sum of it was malice, threatening, and circumstances of imposture in the girl; to which matters he called his witnesses, and they were heard. After this was done, the judge was not satisfied to direct the jury before the imposture was fully declared, but studied, and beat the bush awhile, asking sometimes one and then another, questions as he thought proper. At length he turned to the justice of peace that committed the man, and took the first examinations, and Sir, said he, pray you will ingenuously declare your thoughts, if you have any, touching these straight pins which the girl spit; for you saw her in her fit? Then, my lord, said he, I did not know that I might concern myself in this evidence having taken the examination, and committed the man: But, since your lordship demands it, I must needs say, I think the girl doubling herself in her fit, as being convulsed, bent her head down close to her stomacher, and, with her mouth, took pins out of the edge of that, and then, righting herself a little, spit them into some by-standers' hands. This cast an universal satisfaction upon the minds of the whole audience, and the man was acquitted. As the judge went downstairs, out of the Court, an hideous old woman cried, "God bless your lordship." "What's the matter, good woman?" said the judge. "My Lord" said she, "forty years ago, they would have hanged me for a witch, and they could not; and,



now they would have hanged my poor son." It was not till the ninth year of George II. that the penalties for witchcraft were abolished.

With regard to the judge asking the *opinion* of the committing Magistrate in the last mentioned case, and Sir M. Hale asking Sir J. Brown for his opinion in the trial of witches at Bury, such communications would not be consistent with modern usage; they appear to have been not unfrequent in former times. The Spectator describes Sir Roger de Coverly "getting up to speak in the midst of a trial."

We are enabled to take a later contemporary view of witchcraft and its penalties, which, like the writings of Roger North, may be interesting to literary as well as historical readers.

"As I was walking with my friend Sir Roger, by the side of one of his woods, an old woman applied herself to me for my charity. Her dress and figure put me in mind of the following description in Otway :

In a close lane, as I pursu'd my journey,  
I spy'd a wrinkled hag, with age grown double,  
Picking dry sticks, and mumbling to herself.  
Her eyes with scalding rheum were gall'd and red;  
Cold palsy shook her head; her hands seem'd wither'd;  
And on her crooked shoulders she had wrapp'd  
The tatter'd remnants of an old strip'd hanging,  
Which serv'd to keep her carcass from the cold,  
So there was nothing of a piece about her  
Her lower weeds were all o'er coarsely patch'd  
With diff'rent colour'd rags, black, red, white, yellow,  
And seem'd to speak variety of wretchedness.

"As I was musing on this description, and comparing it with the object before me, the Knight told me, that this very old woman had the reputation of being a witch all over the country, that her lips were observed always to be in motion,

and that there was not a switch about her house which her neighbours did not believe had carried her several hundreds of miles. If she chanced to stumble, they always found sticks and straws that lay in the figure of a cross before her. If she made any mistake at Church, and cried amen in a wrong place, they never failed to conclude that she was saying her prayers backwards. There was not a maid in the parish that would take a pin of her, though she should offer a bag of money with it. She goes by the name of Moll White, and has made the country ring with several imaginary exploits which are palmed upon her. If the dairy-maid does not make her butter to come as soon as she would have it, Moll White is at the bottom of the churn. If a horse sweats in the stable, Moll White has been upon his back. If a hare makes an unexpected escape from the hounds, the huntsman curses Moll White. Nay (says Sir Roger) I have known the master of the pack, upon such an occasion, send one of his servants to see if Moll White had been out that morning.

“ This account raised my curiosity so far, that I begged my friend Sir Roger to go with me into her hovel, which stood in a solitary corner under the side of the wood. Upon our first entering, Sir Roger winked to me, and pointed at something that stood behind the door, which, upon looking that way, I found to be an old broomstaff. At the same time he whispered me in the ear, to take notice of a tabby cat, that sat in the chimney corner, which, as the Knight told me, lay under as bad a report as Moll White herself; for besides that Moll is said often to accompany her in the same shape, the cat is reported to have spoken twice or thrice in her life, and to have played several pranks above the capacity of an ordinary cat.

“ I was secretly concerned to see human nature in so much wretchedness and disgrace ; but at the same time could not forbear smiling to hear Sir Roger, who is a little puzzled about the old woman, advising her, as a justice of peace, to avoid all communication with the devil, and never to hurt any of her neighbours’ cattle. We concluded our visit with a bounty, which was very acceptable.

“ In our return home, Sir Roger told me, that old Moll had been often brought before him for making children spit pins, and giving maids the night-mare ; and that the country people would be tossing her into a pond, and trying experiments with her every day, if it was not for him and his chaplain.

“ I have since found, upon inquiry that Sir Roger was several times staggered with the reports that had been brought him concerning this old woman, and would frequently have bound her over to the county sessions, had not his chaplain with much ado persuaded him to the contrary.

“ I have been the more particular in this account because I hear there is scarce a village in England that has not a Moll White : when an old woman begins to doat and grows chargeable to a parish, she is generally turned into a witch, and fills the whole country with extravagant fancies, imaginary distempers, and terrifying dreams. In the mean time the poor wretch that is the innocent occasion of so many evils, begins to be frightened at herself, and some times confesses secret commerce and familiarities that her imagination forms in a delirious old age. This frequently cuts off charity from the greatest objects of compassion, and inspires people with a malevolence towards those poor decrepit parts of our species, in whom human nature is defaced by infirmity and dotage.”

Specimens of the various notices of witchcraft and other demoniacal agency in English poetry would fill a volume. The Dr. Faustus of Marlowe, an Anti-Shaksperian dramatist, is powerfully written, particularly the soliloquy between the clock striking eleven, the half hour, and twelve, when his compact with the devil is concluded. We have, besides, Middleton's Witch, Macbeth, Ben Jonson's Masque, which he published with an explanation of all the classical allusions to witchcraft, for the benefit of Prince Henry. Jonson's Sad Shepherd describes a Witch-hunt by Robin Hood's followers. We have old plays, one called the Lancashire Witches, where a man discovers a horse in his stable to be his wife; he having unknowingly married a witch. Another, the Witch of Edmonton with Mother Sawyer and her black familiar dog. W. Scott has given us a very striking description of the opening of the tomb of Michael Scot, and taking his magical book, at which the dead man appeared to frown. Roger Bacon's single-speeched brazen head is noticed in Hudibras. Shakspeare has introduced the pretended bewitchment of Richard's arm. He has touched more than our other poets on the power of witches over the winds. King James had, in fact, considered himself ill used by witches in this respect on the occasion of bringing to Scotland his Danish wife. Calypso is represented to have had power over the winds, and in Ephesians ch. ii. v. 2, the Devil is called "The Prince of the power of air."

When the witty Harrington was asked by King James, if he could account for the circumstance that sorcery was generally practised by old women, he answered his Majesty that he supposed it was because, as is written in the Scriptures, "The devil walketh in *dry* places." The king was of opinion that it was because the serpent having had so much success with

Eve, felt himself more “homelier” with the female sex. Witches were supposed to be unable to shed tears ; to have an extra teat ; to be unable to say the Lord’s prayer correctly, at least when reading it forwards ; to be insensible to any pain from pins run into their sides ; to swim upon water, when their hands and feet were tied across, the right hand to the left foot, and left hand to the right foot. King James, in his Book on Dæmonology, thus accounts for the water-proof and that of the absence of the tears—“It appears that God hath appointed, for a supernatural sign of the monstrous impiety of witches, that the water shall refuse to receive them in her bosom that have shaken off the sacred water of baptism : no not so much as their eyes are able to shed tears (threaten and *torture* them as you please ; ) albeit the women-kind especially be able otherways to shed tears at very light occasion when they will : yea, although it were dissemblingly, like the crocodiles.”

The witch’s *cat* spoken of by Addison has made a considerable figure in the history of Dæmonology. The witches in *Macbeth* begin their incantations with “thrice the brindred *cat* hath mewed,” and one of the witches is called *Gray-malkin* ; the commentators suppose that she used to speak her part in a tone resembling that of cats. In 1618, two witches were hanged at Lincoln for bewitching a child of the earl of Rutland ; the child’s monument relating the circumstance may be seen in Bottesworth Church : A fact proved at the trial was, that one of the witches rubbed her cat with a handkerchief belonging to the child, and bade her fly and go ; to which the cat answered *mew*. On the trial of the witches of *Warboys* who were hanged in 1593, at Huntingdon, (on which occasion the prosecutor left a considerable sum to Queen’s College Cam-



bridge for an annual sermon against *witchcraft*) it was part of the evidence against the prisoners, that one of the bewitched persons *dreamt of a cat*.

It would appear from some very ancient laws, that within traditionary times cats were rare in Great Britain. The statutory price of a kitten before it could see was fixed at a penny ; till it caught a mouse twopence ; when it commenced mouser fourpence. If any one stole or killed the cat that guarded the king's granary, he was to forfeit as much wheat extending along the whole floor of the granary, as when poured on the cat suspended by its tail, (the head touching the floor,) would form a heap high enough to cover the tail's tip.

Several authentic instances are known of the familiarity of cats with particular horses. A black cat was a favorite companion of the famous Godolphin Arabian. When the horse died in 1753, the cat continued sitting upon it, till it was put under ground ; it then crawled slowly and reluctantly away, and was not heard of for a long time afterwards, when its dead body was found in a loft.

Would the nature of our subject permit, we should derive much edification and some amusement from Whittington and his cat, Mother Hubbard and her cats, Montaigne's cat, and the story of the cat transformed into a woman. A very scarce *morality* of the time of Edward VI. is called *beware the cat*. In *Gammer Gurton's Needle* printed 1551, which was long considered our earliest English play, and is clearly the second in point of antiquity, *Gibb* the cat, whose shining eyes in the dark create considerable surprize and terror, is a principal character.

In *Romeo and Juliet*, Benvolio asks "Why what is Tybalt?" Mercutio says "More than *Prince of cats*." This is an allusion

to Tybert the name given to the cat, a conspicuous character, in the tale of *Reynard the Fox*. This was a well known story in old times ; it was translated from the Dutch, and printed by Caxton in England in 1481 : the earliest book printed in England is the Caxton *Game of Chess* 1474. On the subject of the Prince of cats there is the following story in the amusing letters fictitiously attributed to the mysterious Lord Lyttleton. " A traveller, benighted in a wild and mountainous country, (if my recollection does not fail me, in the Highlands of Scotland,) at length beholds the welcome light of a neighbouring habitation. He urges his horse towards it, when, instead of a house, he approached a kind of illuminated Chapel, from whence issued the most alarming sounds he had ever heard. Though greatly surprised and terrified, he ventured to look through a window of the building, when he was amazed to see a large assembly of cats, who, arranged in solemn order, were lamenting over the corpse of one of their own species, which lay in state, and was surrounded with the various emblems of sovereignty. Alarmed and terrified at this extraordinary spectacle, he hastened from the place with greater eagerness than he approached it ; and arriving, some time after, at the house of a gentleman who never turned the wanderer from his gate, the impressions of what he had seen were so visible on his countenance, that his friendly host inquired into the cause of his anxiety. He accordingly told his story, and, having finished it, a large family cat, who had lain, during the narrative, before the fire, immediately started up, and very articulately exclaimed, " Then I am king of cats ? " and, having thus announced its new dignity, the animal darted up the chimney, and was seen no more."

DON Quixote had a terrible conflict with *cats*, which he took for necromancers. They have more electricity than any other animal with which we are acquainted. Shylock adverts to the extraordinary antipathies which some people have taken to them. We occasionally hear of the same antipathies in the present day. Addison mentions them in one of his Spectators. "When we had sat down, this civility among us turned the discourse from eatables to other sorts of aversions; and the eternal *cat*, which plagues every conversation of this nature, began then to engross the subject. One had sweated at the sight of it; another had smelled it out as it lay concealed in a very distant cupboard; and he who crowned the whole set of these stories, reckoned up the number of times in which it had occasioned him to swoon away. At last, says he, that you may all be satisfied of my invincible aversion to a *cat*, I shall give an unanswerable instance. 'As I was going through a street of London, where I had never been till then, I felt a general damp and a faintness all over me, which I could not tell how to account for, till I chanced to cast my eyes upwards, and found that I was passing under a sign-post on which the picture of a *cat* was hung.'"

The famous *Kit-cat* club was so called from the landlord of the house where the members met; his name was Christopher Cat. Addison in a paper of the Spectator gives a dissertation on the origin, and uses of the *cat-call*, which, it appears, in his time was very commonly employed to express disapprobation at theatres. He incidentally notices how much our stringed musical instruments are behoven to cats.

In the obituary of the Gentleman's Magazine will be found A. D. 1791, as follows—"Lately, in Southampton-row, Bloomsbury, Mrs. Gregg, a single lady, at the age of 59, remarkable

for her *benevolence to cats*. No fewer than 80 were entertained under her hospitable roof at the time of her decease, at an allowance of a guinea a week. She suffered no man servant to sleep in her house; and her maids being frequently tired of their attendance on such a numerous household, she was obliged, at last, to hire a black woman to look after her cats."

One of the beauties of King Charles II.'s Court, whose pictures by Sir Peter Lely still embellish the walls of Windsor, the La Belle Stewart of Grammont, (the lady whose marriage with the Duke of Richmond occasioned the rupture between the King and Lord Clarendon,) made several legacies of cats. She left them by her will to her friends, with annuities during the lives of the animals for their support. This testamentary disposition is what Pope alludes to when he says—

Die, and endow a college—or a *cat*.

We have several familiar adages, expressions, and vulgar errors connected with cats. As that "a cat may look at a king," "letting the cat out of the bag," "a catspaw," a "cat-o-nine-tails," "a cat in hell without claws," "belling the cat," "all cats are grey in the dark," (a favorite adage with a character in Roderick Random.) Lady Macbeth incites her husband to commit murder by comparing him to the "poor cat in the adage," (viz. the cat loves fish, but dares not wet her feet.) "The cat will have its mew" is used by Hamlet. A phrase, to "turn cat in the pan" applied to turn-coats, is probably a metaphor derived from frying pancakes (cates.) In Gay's *Song of Similes* we have—

I, *melancholy as a cat*,  
Am kept awake to weep;  
But she, insensible to that,  
Sound as a top can sleep.

Hudibras compares the resurrections of the Rump Parliament to the *nine lives* of a cat—

That, after several rude ejections,  
And as prodigious resurrections,  
With new reversions of nine lives  
Starts up, and, like a *cat*, survives.

The modern Poets, if they have not excelled the ancients in many respects, have at least outshone them in their descriptions of cats. We have the cat in Pope's *town and country mouse*; the simile of Grimalkin to the bailiff in Philip's *splendid shilling*; Gray's *Cat* drowned in a tub of gold fishes; Cowper's *Poet's cat*; the Kitten in Goldsmith's *Edwin and Angelina*; Jacob Bryant wrote verses on a cat in the *Gentleman's Magazine*; Gough, the Antiquary, wrote a parody on Lycidas by way of elegy on a cat. One of our most primitive poetical compositions relates to a *cat* in connection with a *fiddle*. But in order to shew that this animal might well be looked upon by believers in witchcraft as endowed with supernatural powers, we may quote from Southey a passage in which he regards the animal as capable of instructing mankind—

Swell thy tail,  
And stretch thy claws, most democratic beast !  
I like thy independence ! Treat thee well,  
Thou art as playful as young innocence.  
But, if we play the governor, and break  
The social compact, God has given thee claws,  
And thou hast sense to use them. Oh ! that man  
Would copy this thy wisdom ! spaniel fool,  
He crouches down, and licks his tyrant's hand  
And courts oppression. Wiser animal !  
I gaze on thee familiar, not enslaved !



## CHAPTER III.

ON THE SOLACES, USEFUL OCCUPATIONS AND HONORS OF OLD MEN.

IN the preceding chapter we viewed old age in most of the gloomy or unamiable lights in which it is commonly regarded by mankind. We shall now endeavour to present it under a more captivating face and garb. It appears that Goldsmith, in his travels, used often to accompany, on his flute, the light fantastic toes of the climacterical. The following lines are taken from his description of France :

Gay, sprightly land of mirth and social ease,  
Pleas'd with thyself, whom all the world can please,  
How often have I led thy sportive choir,  
With tuneless pipe beside the murmuring Loire.  
And haply, though my harsh touch falt'ring still  
But mock'd all tune, and marr'd the dancers' skill,  
Yet would the village praise my wond'rous power,  
And dance, forgetful of the noontide hour.  
Alike all ages ; dames of ancient days  
Have led their children thro' the mirthful maze ;  
And the gay grandsire, skill'd in gestic lore  
*Has frisked beneath the burthen of threescore.*

Similar examples are to be found among the records of our own Inns of Courts. Thus so late as 1733, when Mr. Talbot took leave of the Inner Temple on having the Great Seal delivered to him, it is related by Dugdale that the master of the Revels took the Lord Chancellor by the right hand, and

he, with his left, took Mr. Justice Page, who joined to the other Judges, Sergeants, and Benchers present danced *round about the coal fire* in the Hall three times according to the old ceremony, and that they were aided in the figure of the dance by Mr. George Cook, the Prothonotary, then sixty years old. During the dance the ancient song, “round about, &c.” accompanied by music was sung by one Toby Aston, dressed in a Bar gown.

In like manner Gray, in his *Long Story*, speaks of Lord Keeper Hatton, who is introduced in Sheridan’s play of the Critic as *turning out his toes* when he walks.

Full oft within these spacious halls,  
When he had fifty winters o’er him,  
My grave Lord Keeper led the brawls,  
The Seal and Maces danced before him.

His bushy beard and shoe-strings green,  
His high crown’d hat and satin doublet,  
Moved the stout heart of England’s Queen,  
Though Pope and Spaniard could not trouble it.

One of the most mirthful characters which the human imagination has conjured up, certainly one who has been the cause of the most mirth in others, is a character on whom the effects of *age* will appear from the following dialogue :

*Falstaff.* You, that are old, consider not the capacities of us, that are young. You measure the heat of our livers with the bitterness of your galls. And we, that are in the vaward of our youth, I must confess, are wags too.

*Chief Justice.* Do you set down your name in the scroll of youth, that are written down old with all the characters of age? Have you not a moist eye? a dry hand? a yellow cheek? a white beard? a decreasing leg? an increasing

belly ? Is not your voice broken ? your wind short ? your chin double ? your wit single ? and every part about you blasted with antiquity ? and will you yet call yourself young ? Fye, fye, fye, Sir John !

*Falstaff.* My lord, I was born about three o'clock in the afternoon, with a white head, and something a round belly. For my voice, I have lost it with hollaing, and singing of anthems. To approve my youth further, I will not ; the truth is, I am only old in judgment and understanding.

Falstaff, in a different scene, hints at the Chief Justice's age more delicately than the Chief Justice does at his—

*Chief Justice.* Sir John Falstaff, a word with you.

*Falstaff.* My good Lord ! God give your Lordship good time of day. I am glad to see your Lordship abroad. I heard say your Lordship was sick, I hope your Lordship goes abroad by advice. Your Lordship, though not clean past your youth, hath yet some smack of age in you, some relish of the saltness of time ; and I must humbly beseech your Lordship to have a reverend care of your health.

To represent the mirth-moving sallies which Shakspeare associates with age "inclining to threescore" in the character of Falstaff, would be to transcribe almost every passage which he utters. The following scene is a fair specimen of Falstaff's humor, and is connected with our subject.

*P. Hen.* Do thou stand for my father, and examine me upon the particulars of my life.

*Fal.* Shall I ? content :—this chair shall be my state, this dagger my sceptre, and this cushion my crown.

*P. Hen.* Thy state is taken for a joint-stool, thy golden sceptre for a leaden dagger, and thy precious rich crown, for a pitiful bald crown !

*Fal.* Well, an the fire of grace be not quite out of thee, now shalt thou be moved. Give me a cup of sack, to make mine eyes look red, that it may be thought I have wept; for I must speak in passion, and I will do it in King Cambyyses' vein.

*P. Hen.* Well, here is my leg.

*Fal.* And here is my speech:—stand aside nobility.

*Hostess.* This is excellent sport, i' faith.

*Fal.* Weep not, sweet Queen, for trickling tears are vain.

*Host.* O, the father, how he holds his countenance!

*Fal.* For God's sake, lords, convey my tristful queen, for tears do stop the flood-gates of her eyes.

*Host.* O rare! he doth it as like one of these harlotry players, as I ever see.

*Fal.* Peace, good pint-pot, peace, good tickle-brain. Harry! I do not only marvel where thou spendest thy time, but also how thou art accompanied: for though the camomile, the more it is trodden on, the faster it grows, yet youth, the more it is wasted, the sooner it wears. That thou art my son, I have partly thy mother's word, partly my own opinion, but chiefly, a villainous trick of thine eye, and a foolish hanging of thy nether lip, that doth warrant me. If then thou be son to me, here lies the point; why, being son to me, art thou so pointed at? Shall the blessed sun of heaven prove a micher, and eat blackberries? a question not to be asked. Shall the son of England prove a thief, and take purses? a question to be asked. There is a thing, Harry, which thou hast often heard of, and it is known to many in our land by the name of *pitch*: this pitch, as ancient writers do report, doth defile; so doth the company thou keepest: for, Harry, now I do not speak to thee in drink

but in tears ; not in pleasure, but in passion ; not in words only, but in woes also :—and yet there is a virtuous man, whom I have often noted in thy company, but I know not his name.

*P. Hen.* What manner of man, an it like your majesty ?

*Fal.* A good portly man, i' faith, and a corpulent ; of a cheerful look, a pleasing eye, and a most noble carriage ; and, as I think his age *some fifty or, by 'r-lady, inclining to three-score* ; and now I remember me, his name is *Falstaff* : if *that* man should be lewdly given, he deceiveth me ; for, Harry, I see virtue in his looks. If then the tree may be known by the fruit, as the fruit by the tree, then, peremptorily I speak it, there is virtue in that Falstaff : him keep with, the rest banish. And tell me now, thou naughty varlet, tell me, where hast thou been this month ?

*P. Hen.* Dost *thou* speak like a king ? Do thou stand for me, and *I'll* play my father.

*Fal.* Depose me ? if thou dost it half so gravely, so majestically, both in word and matter, hang me up by the heels for a rabbet-sucker, or a poulter's hare.

*P. Hen.* Well, here I am set.

*Fal.* And here I stand :—judge, my masters.

*P. Hen.* Now Harry ? whence come you ?

*Fal.* My noble lord, from Eastcheap.

*P. Hen.* The complaints I hear of thee are grievous.

*Fal.* Sblood, my Lord, they are false :—nay, I'll tickle ye for a young Prince, i' faith.

*P. Hen.* Swearst thou, ungracious boy ? henceforth ne'er look on me. Thou art violently carried away from grace : there is a devil haunts thee, in the likeness of a fat old man : *a tun of man* is thy companion. Why dost thou converse with



that trunk of humours, that bolting-hutch of beastliness, that swoln parcel of dropsies, that huge bombard of sack, that stuffed cloak-bag of guts, that roasted Manningtree ox, with the pudding in his belly, that reverend vice, that grey iniquity, that father ruffian, that vanity in years ! Wherein is he good, but to taste sack and drink it ? wherein neat and cleanly, but to carve a capon and eat it ? wherein cunning, but in craft ? wherein crafty, but in villainy ? wherein villainous but in all things ? wherein worthy, but in nothing ?

*Fal.* I would, your grace would take me with you ? whom means your grace ?

*P. Hen.* That villainous abominable misleader of youth, *Falstaff*, that old white-bearded Satan.

*Fal.* My lord, the man I know.

*P. Hen.* I know, thou dost.

*Fal.* But to say, I know more harm in him than in myself, were to say more than I know. That he is *old*, (the more the pity,) his white hairs do witness it : but that he is (saving your reverence,) a whore-master, that I utterly deny. If sack and sugar be a fault, God help the wicked ! If to be old and merry be a sin, then many an old host that I know, is damned : if to be fat be to be hated, then Pharoah's lean kine are to be loved. No, my good lord ; banish Peto, banish Bardolph, banish Poins : but for sweet Jack *Falstaff*, kind Jack *Falstaff*, true Jack *Falstaff*, valiant Jack *Falstaff*, and therefore more valiant, being as he is, *old Jack Falstaff*, banish not him thy Harry's company, banish not him thy Harry's company ; banish plump Jack, and banish all the world.

*P. Hen.* I do, I will.

*A knocking heard.*

A Roman Poet has observed, that a person whose early days have been well spent, enjoys two lives, by means of the pleasure which he has of living over again the former scenes in which he has been engaged. Goldsmith has drawn a pleasing picture of the old soldier who "talked the night away," at the Parson's fireside, and, in the course of his stories,

"Shouldered his crutch, and shewed how fields were won."

On the same theme we have a passage in Rogers's *Pleasures of Memory*—

Nor yet to pleasing objects are confined  
The silent feasts of the reflecting mind ;  
Danger and death a dread delight inspire,  
And the bald veteran glows with wonted fire,  
When, richly bronzed by many a summer-sun,  
He counts his scars, and tells what deeds were done.

Go, with old Thames, view Chelsea's glorious pile ;  
And ask the shattered hero ;—Whence his smile ?  
Go, view the splendid domes of Greenwich—Go,  
And own what raptures from reflection flow.

Hail, noblest structures imaged in the wave !  
A nation's grateful tribute to the brave.  
Hail blest retreats from war and shipwreck, hail !  
That oft arrest the wondering stranger's sail.  
Long have ye heard the narratives of age,  
The battle's havoc, and the tempest's rage ;  
Long have ye known Reflection's genial ray  
Gild the calm close of Valour's various day.

Time's sombrous touches soon correct the piece,  
Mellow each tint, and bid each discord cease :  
A softer tone of light pervades the whole,  
And steals a pensive languor o'er the soul.

One of the most agreeable pictures of a veteran amusing

himself in his old age, is in the account given by Sterne of the campaigns of *my uncle Toby*, and *Corporal Trim*.

“My uncle Toby came down, as the reader has been informed, with plans along with him, of almost every fortified town in Italy and Flanders ; so let the duke of Marlborough, or the allies, have set down before what town they pleased, my uncle Toby was prepared for them.

“His way, which was the simplest one in the world, was this ; as soon as ever a town was invested—(but sooner when the design was known) to take the plan of it (let it be what town it would) and enlarge it upon a scale to the exact size of his bowling-green ; upon the surface of which, by means of a large roll of packthread, and a number of small piquets driven into the ground at the several angles, he transferred the lines from his paper ; then taking the profile of the place with its works, to determine the depths and slopes of the ditches,—the talus of the glacis, and the precise height of the several baaquets, parapets, &c.—he set the corporal to work—and sweetly went it on :—the nature of the soil,—the nature of the work itself,—and above all, the good nature of my uncle Toby sitting by from morning to night, and chatting kindly with the corporal upon past—done deeds,—left labour little else but the ceremony of the name.

“When the place was finished in this manner, and put into a proper posture of defence,—it was invested,—and my uncle Toby and the corporal began to run their first parallel. I beg I may not be interrupted in my story, by being told, that the first parallel should be at least three hundred toises distant from the main body of the place,—and that I have not left a single inch for it ;—for my uncle Toby took the liberty of inroaching upon his kitchen-garden, for the sake

of enlarging his works on the bowling-green, and for that reason generally ran his first and second parallels betwixt two rows of his cabbages and his cauliflowers.

“ When the town, with its works, was finished, my uncle Toby and the corporal began to run their first parallel—not at random, or anyhow—but from the same points and distances the allies had begun to run theirs; and regulating their approaches and attacks, by the accounts my uncle Toby received from the daily papers,—they went on, during the whole siege, step by step with the allies.

“ When the Duke of Marlborough made a lodgement,—my uncle Toby made a lodgement too. And when the face of a bastion was battered down, or a defence ruined,—the corporal took his mattock and did as much,—and so on;—gaining ground, and making themselves masters of the works one after another, till the town fell into their hands.

“ To one who took pleasure in the happy state of others,—there could not have been a greater sight in the world, than on a post morning, in which a practicable breach had been made by the Duke of Marlborough, in the main body of the place,—to have stood behind the horn-beam hedge, and observed the spirit with which my uncle Toby, with Trim behind him, sallied forth;—the one with the Gazette in his hand,—the other with a spade on his shoulder to execute the contents. What an honest triumph in my uncle Toby’s looks as he marched up the ramparts! What intense pleasure swimming in his eye as he stood over the corporal, reading the paragraph ten times over to him, as he was at work, lest peradventure, he should make the breach an inch too wide;—or leave it an inch too narrow. But when the *chamade* was beat, and the corporal helped my uncle up it, and followed

with the colours in his hand, to fix them upon the ramparts—Heaven ! Earth ! Sea !—but what avails apostrophes ?—with all your elements, wet or dry, ye never compounded so intoxicating a draught.”

Shakspeare has finely described a Veteran’s reminiscences, in King Henry’s speech before the battle of Agincourt :

He that outlives this day, and comes safe home,  
Will stand a tip-toe, when this day is named,  
And rouse him at the name of Crispian.  
He that shall live this day, and see old age  
Will yearly on its vigil feast his neighbour,  
And say, “To-morrow is St. Crispian !”  
Then will he strip his sleeve, and shew his scars.  
*Old men forget ; yet shall not all forget,*  
But they ’ll remember with advantages  
What feats they did that day. Then shall our names,  
Familiar in their mouths, as household words,  
Harry the King, Bedford, and Exeter,  
Warwick and Talbot, Salisbury and Gloucester,  
Be in their flowing cups freshly remembered.

The pleasures of memory in Old People may be thought, in a great measure, to counterbalance those of hope in the young. They, at all events afford more solid satisfaction, and are less exposed to the keenness of disappointment. This subject is adverted to in the following verses, which conclude Rogers’s Poem :

Lighter than air, Hope’s summer-visions die,  
If but a fleeting cloud obscure the sky ;  
If but a beam of sober reason play,  
Lo, Fancy’s fairy frost-work melts away !  
But can the wiles of art, the grasp of power,  
Snatch the rich relics of a well-spent hour ?  
These, when the trembling spirit wings her flight,  
Pour round her path a stream of living light ;



And gild those pure and perfect realms of rest,  
Where virtue triumphs, and her sons are blest !

There is a very good paper, by Addison, in the *Spectator*, upon this subject. After contrasting the opinions of Locke and Mallebranche with a passage in the *Alcoran*, and a story in the *Turkish Tales* illustrative of the nature of time or duration, he concludes thus—"How different is the view of past life, in the man who is grown old in knowledge and wisdom, from that of him who is grown old in ignorance and folly ! The latter is like the owner of a barren country, that fills his eye with the prospect of naked hills and plains, which produce nothing either profitable or ornamental. The other beholds a beautiful and spacious landscape divided into delightful gardens, green meadows, fruitful fields ; and can scarce cast his eye on a single spot of his possessions, that is not covered with some beautiful plant or flower."

Ezra describes the different feelings of the Jewish people, on the rebuilding of their temple : The old Priests and Levites who had served in the former edifice, had the memory of it and of its associations revived in their minds by the festival in honor of its restoration. This power of resuscitating former emotions has deservedly engaged much of the attention of our poets ; as for example, in the Irish Melody called "The Meeting of the Waters," where the Poet indulges his memory in recalling a beautiful scene associated in his mind with the friends in whose company he had formerly visited it.

There is not in this wild world a valley so sweet,  
As that vale in whose bosom the bright waters meet.  
Oh ! the last rays of feeling and life must depart,  
Ere the bloom of that valley shall fade from my heart.

Yet it was not that nature had shed o'er the scene  
 Her purest of chrystal, and brightest of green,  
 'Twas not the soft magic of streamlet or hill,  
 Oh! no, it was something more exquisite still.

'Twas that friends the beloved of my bosom were near,  
 Who made every dear scene of enchantment more dear.

Wordsworth pursues a similar train of thought in a poem called *Yarrow Revisited*, in which he commemorates a day spent with Walter Scott, among the ruins of Newark Castle, the scene where the *Last Minstrel* recited his *Lay*.

Bear witness, ye, whose thoughts that day  
 In Yarrow's groves were centred;  
 Who, through the silent portal arch  
 Of mouldering Newark enter'd,  
 And clomb'd the winding stair that once  
 Too timidly was mounted  
 By the "last Minstrel," (not the last)  
 Ere he his tale recounted!

Flow on for ever, Yarrow Stream!  
 Fulfil thy pensive duty,  
 Well pleased that future bards should chaunt  
 For simple hearts thy beauty.  
 To dream-light dear while yet unseen,  
 Dear to the common sunshine,  
 And dearer still, as now I feel,  
 To Memory's shadowy moonshine.

The recollections of childhood and youth could not fail to attract the attention of Poets. Gray expresses some natural feelings on this subject in his "Ode on Eton College."

Ah happy hills! ah pleasing shade!  
 Ah fields beloved in vain!  
 Where once my careless childhood strayed  
 A stranger yet to pain!

I feel the gales that from ye blow  
 A momentary bliss bestow ;  
 As waving fresh their gladsome wing,  
 My weary soul they seem to sooth,  
 And redolent of joy and youth  
 'To breathe a second spring.

So in Rogers's poem, in which several historical examples of like feeling are introduced.

'Twas here we chased the slipper by the sound,  
 And turn'd the blindfold hero round and round,  
 Soar'd in the swing, half pleased and half afraid,  
 Through sister elms that waved their summer-shade,  
 Or strewed with crumbs yon root-inwoven seat,  
 To lure the redbreast from his lone retreat.  
 Childhood's loved group revisits every scene ;  
 The tangled wood-walk, and the tufted green !  
 Indulgent Memory wakes, and lo, they live !  
 Clothed with far softer hues than light can give.

Lord Byron, in his early poems, thus describes the pleasure of revisiting the elm in Harrow Churchyard.

Spot of my youth ! whose heavy branches sigh  
 Swept by the breeze that fans thy cloudless sky ;  
 Where now alone I move, who oft have trod  
 With those I lov'd thy soft and verdant sod.  
 Oh as I trace again thy winding hill,  
 Mine eyes admire, my heart adores thee still,  
 Thou drooping Elm ! beneath whose boughs I lay  
 And frequent mused the twilight hours away,  
 When as they once were wont, my limbs recline ;  
 But ah ! without the thoughts which then were mine.

Warton thus celebrates his Alma Mater, Oxford—

Ye fretted pinnacles, ye fanes sublime,  
 Ye towers that wear the mossy vest of time !  
 Ye massy piles of old munificence,  
 At once the pride of learning and defence ;  
 Ye cloisters pale, that lengthening to the sight,  
 To contemplation, step by step, invite

Ye high-arch'd walks, where oft the whispers clear  
 Of harps unseen have swept the poet's ear ;  
 Ye temples dim, where pious duty pays  
 Her holy hymns of ever-echoing praise ;  
 Lo ! your lov'd Isis, from the bordering vale  
 With all a mother's fondness bids you hail !  
 Hail ! Oxford, hail !

Cowley and Gray have celebrated Cambridge where they were educated.—In Gray's installation ode we have—

“ Ye brown o'er-arching groves  
 That contemplation loves,  
 Where willowy Camus lingers with delight ;  
 Oft at the blush of dawn  
 I trod your level lawn,  
 Oft woo'd the gleam of Cynthia silver-bright,  
 In cloisters dim, far from the haunts of folly.  
 With freedom by my side, and soft-eyed melancholy.”

But hark ! the portals sound, and pacing forth  
 With solemn steps and slow,  
 High Potentates, and Dames of royal birth,  
 And mitred Fathers, in long order go,  
 Great Edward with his lilies on his brow  
 From haughty Gallia torn ;  
 And sad Chantillon, on her bridal morn  
 That wept her bleeding love, and princely Clare  
 And Anjou's heroiné ; and the paler rose,  
 The rival of her crown, and of her woes ;  
 And either Henry there,  
 The murdered Saint, and the majestic Lord  
 That broke the bonds of Rome :  
 (Their tears, their little triumphs o'er,  
 Their human passions now no more,  
 Save charity, that glows beyond the tomb,)  
 All that on Granta's fruitful plain  
 Rich streams of regal bounty pour'd,  
 And bade these awful fanes, and turrets rise,

Moore has charmingly noticed the recollections of *Love's young dream*. But though he says they afford “ the greenest

spot on memory's waste ;" he admits that the reality was far more delightful. In this particular case, perhaps, he is right. But it may be doubted whether school-days are not presented to us by our memories in more charming colors than belonged to them at the time they were passing. The question, however, is not between actual enjoyment, and the pleasure of remembering that enjoyment. But it is, whether age may not have an advantage over youth in the number and variety of reminiscences which are delightful as reminiscences ?

The human mind is so constituted as to derive gratification even from scenes which have been accompanied with the most acute mental pain. Our memories soften what was distressing, and convert it into a source of calm and contemplative enjoyment, as, in Akenside's Pleasures of the Imagination—

Ask the faithful youth  
 Why the cold urn of her whom long he loved  
 So often fills his arms ; so often draws  
 His lonely footsteps at the silent hour,  
 To pay the mournful tribute of his tears ?  
 Oh ! he will tell you that the wealth of worlds  
 Should ne'er seduce his bosom to forego  
 That sacred hour, when, stealing from the noise  
 Of care and envy, sweet remembrance soothes  
 With virtue's kindest looks his aching breast,  
 And turns his tears to rapture.

It is deserving of consideration with reference to the memories of aged persons, that a part of human life is spent in *dreaming*. In old age, the habit of dreaming increases, or, Dugald Stewart would contend, the sleep being less sound, our memories, among the faculties depending on our volition, are less in a state of suspension. The older we grow, the more rich and copious is the collection of images from which



our dreams are formed. Addison proposes this problem concerning dreams, which indicates his opinion of their importance in our estimates of human happiness. "Supposing a man always happy in his dreams, and miserable in his waking thoughts, and that his life was equally divided between them, whether would he be more happy or miserable?" Lord Byron has some lines on this subject very characteristic of his own peculiar feelings :

Our life is two-fold. Sleep hath its own world,  
 A boundary between the things misnamed  
 Death and existence. Sleep hath its own world,  
 And a wide realm of wild reality,  
 And dreams in their development have breath,  
 And tears, and tortures, and the touch of joy;  
 They leave a weight upon our waking thoughts,  
 They take a weight from off our waking toils,  
 They do divide our being ; they become  
 A portion of ourselves as of our time,  
 And look like heralds of eternity ;  
 They pass like spirits of the past—they speak  
 Like sibyls of the future ; they have power,  
 The tyranny of pleasure and of pain ;  
 They make us what we were not—what they will,  
 And shake us with the vision that's gone by,  
 The dread of vanished shadows. Are they so ?  
 Is not the past all shadows ? What are they ?  
 Creations of the mind ? The mind can make  
 Substance, and people planets of its own  
 With beings brighter than have been, and give  
 A breath to forms which can outlive all flesh.  
 I would recall a vision which I dreamed  
 Perchance in sleep—for in itself a thought,  
 A slumbering thought is capable of years,  
 And curdles a long life into one hour.

Of the eight scenes of Byron's dream, perhaps the most pleasing is the fourth—

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream,  
 The boy was sprung to manhood. In the wilds  
 Of fiery climes he made himself a home,  
 And his soul drank their sunbeams ; he was girt  
 With strange and dusky aspects ; he was not  
 Himself like what he had been ; on the sea,  
 And on the shore he was a wanderer ;  
 There was a mass of many images  
 Crowded like waves upon me ; but he was,  
 A part of all ; and in the last he lay  
 Reposing from the noontide sultriness,  
 Couch'd among fallen columns, in the shade  
 Of ruined walls that had survived the names  
 Of those that reared them ; by his sleeping side  
 Stood camels grazing, and some goodly steeds  
 Were fastened near a fountain ; and a man  
 Clad in a flowing garb did watch the while,  
 While many of his tribe slumber'd around,  
 And they were canopied by the blue sky,  
 So cloudless, clear, and purely beautiful,  
 That God alone was to be seen in heaven.

Chaucer and Shakspeare have described those dreams  
 which are suggested by the occupations of the day, and Pope,  
 in his *Abelard and Eloisa*, has, in glowing language, exhibited  
 "the dreams of an erring soul."

When, at the close of each sad sorrowing day,  
 Fancy restores what vengeance snatched away.

The beautiful forms which may be conjured up in our  
 dreams are prettily noticed by Ben Jonson, in one of his  
*Masques*—

Break, Phant'sie, from thy cave of cloud,  
 And spread thy purple wings ;  
 Now all thy figures are allow'd,  
 And various shapes of things.  
 Create of airy forms a stream  
 It must have blood, and nought of phlegm,  
 And, though it be a waking dream,

Yet let it, like an odour, rise,  
 To all the senses here ;  
 And fall, like sleep upon the eyes,  
 Or music in their ear.

But, perhaps, one of the most beautiful descriptions of dreams to be found in ancient or modern poetry, is that in Thomson's *Castle of Indolence*. The restoration of lost friends, and the revival of the scenes of infancy and youth more particularly belong to the *dreams of the aged*, which is the subject we are considering.

And hither Morpheus sent his kindest dreams,  
 Raising a world of gayer tinct and grace ;  
 O'er which were shadowy cast Elysian gleams,  
 That play'd, in waving lights, from place to place,  
 And shed a roseate smile on nature's face.  
 Not Titian's pencil e'er could so array,  
 So fleece with clouds the pure ethereal space :  
 Ne could it e'er such melting forms display,  
 As loose on flowery beds all languishingly lay.

No, fair illusions ! artful phantoms, no !  
 My muse will not attempt your fairy-land :  
 She has no colours that like yours can glow,  
 To catch your vivid scenes, too gross her hand.  
 But sure it is, was ne'er a subtler band  
 Than these same guileful angel-seeming sprights,  
 Who thus in dreams, voluptuous, soft, and bland,  
 Pour'd all th' Arabian heaven upon her nights,  
 And bless'd them oft besides with more refin'd delights.

They were, in sooth, a most enchanting train,  
 Ev'n feigning virtue ; skilful to unite  
 With evil good, and strew with pleasure pain.  
 But of those fiends, whom blood and broils delight ;  
 Who hurl the wretch, as if to hell outright,  
 Down, down black gulfs, where sullen waters sleep,  
 Or hold him clambering all the fearful night  
 On beetling cliffs, or pent in ruins deep ;  
 They, till due time should serve, were bid far hence to keep.

Ye Guardian Spirits, to whom man is dear,  
 From these foul demons shield the midnight gloom !  
 Angels of fancy and of love, be near,  
 And o'er the blank of sleep diffuse a bloom,  
 Evoke the sacred shades of Greece and Rome,  
 And let them virtue with a look impart :  
 But chief, awhile, O ! lend us from the tomb  
 Those long-lost friends for whom in love we smart,  
 And fill with pious awe and joy-mixt woe the heart.

Or are you sportive. Bid the morn of youth  
 Rise to new light, and beam afresh the days  
 Of innocence, simplicity, and truth ;  
 To cares estrang'd, and manhood's thorny ways.  
 What transport, to retrace our boyish plays,  
 Our easy bliss, when each thing joy supplied ;  
 The woods, the mountains, and the warbling maze  
 Of the wild brooks !—

In forming a due estimate of the pleasures of memory as enjoyed in old age, it is necessary to make some allowance for the circumstance, that the diminution of the brain, attended with the partial failure of the powers of recollection, are commonly the earliest symptoms of decay in the machinery of man. Let us, first, view this occurrence as is described by Locke with eloquence very much above the plain and dry style of his ordinary writings.

“The memory in some men is very tenacious, even to a miracle : but yet there seems to be a constant decay of all our ideas, even of those which are struck deepest, and in the minds the most retentive ; so that, if they be not sometimes renewed by repeated exercise of the senses, or reflection on those kind of objects which at first occasioned them, the print wears out, and at last there remains nothing to be seen. *Thus the ideas, as well as children of our youth, often die before us : and our minds represent to us those tombs, to which we*

*are approaching ; where, though the brass and marble remain, yet the inscriptions are effaced by time, and the imagery moulders away.* The pictures drawn in our minds are laid in fading colours ; and if not sometimes refreshed, vanish and disappear. How much the constitution of our bodies, and the tone of our animal spirits are concerned in this, and whether the temper of the brain make this difference, that in some it retains the characters drawn on it like marble, in others like free-stone, and in others little better than sand, I shall not here enquire : though it may seem probable, that the constitution of the body does sometimes influence the memory ; since we sometimes find a disease quite strip the mind of all its ideas, and the flames of a fever in a few days calcine all those images to dust and confusion, which seemed to be as lasting as if graved in marble.”

It may be observed, on the other hand, that old people will sometimes derive a pleasure even from the difficulty which they experience in recalling particular impressions, as soon as it is surmounted, and the wished-for images or sounds are revived. This circumstance is beautifully described in the opening of the Lay of the Last Minstrel.

The humble boon was soon obtained  
 The Aged Minstrel audience gained,  
 But, when he reached the room of state,  
 Where she, with all her ladies, sate,  
 Perchance he wished his boon denied :  
 For, when to tune his harp he tried,  
 His trembling hands had lost their ease,  
 Which marks security to please ;  
 And scenes, long past, of joy and pain,  
 Came wildering o'er his aged brain—  
 He tried to tune his harp in vain.  
 The pitying Duchess praised its chime,



And gave him heart, and gave him time,  
 'Till every string's according glee  
 Was blended into harmony,  
 And then, he said, he would full fain  
 He could recall an ancient strain,  
 He never thought to sing again.  
 It was not framed for village churles,  
 But for high dames and mighty earls ;  
 He had played it to king Charles the Good,  
 When he kept court in Holyrood ;  
 And much he wished, yet feared, to try  
 The long-forgotten melody.

Amid the strings his fingers strayed,  
 And an uncertain warbling made,  
 And oft he shook his hoary head.  
 But when he caught the measure wild,  
 The old man raised his face, and smiled ;  
 And lightened up his faded eye,  
 With all a poet's extacy !  
 In varying cadence, soft or strong,  
 He swept the sounding chords along :  
 The present scene, the future lot,  
 His toils, his wants, were all forgot :  
 Cold diffidence, and age's frost,  
 In the full tide of song were lost ;  
 Each blank, in faithless memory void,  
 The poet's glowing thought supplied.

With regard to one peculiarity in the *Memories of old People*, Swift expresses his surprise that old men should remember their anecdotes distinctly, and should, notwithstanding, have so little memory as to tell the same story twice in the course of the same conversation. A similar remark is made by Montaigne. "Surtout les viellards sont dangereux, a qui la souvenance des choses passeés demure, et ont perdu la souvenance de leurs redites." Dugald Stewart thinks that the decay of memory which is the common effect of age arises from a diminution of the power of attention. He says—"It is probable, that

as we advance in years, the capacity of attention is weakened by some physical change in the constitution ; but it is also reasonable to think that it also loses its vigor, partly from the effect which the decay of our sensibility, and the extinction of our passions have, in diminishing the interest which we feel in the common occurrences of life."

The pleasures of memory, upon the whole, are greater with old men ; for though they forget faster, they retain more than the young can have acquired. We proceed to qualify a charge of obstinate prejudice in favor of by-gone times, such as has been described by Horace and Le Sage. An extract on this subject from Dugald Stewart will afford a very good specimen of his philosophical writings.

"The Philosopher whose thoughts dwell habitually, not merely upon what is, or has been, but upon what is best and most expedient for mankind ; who to the study of books, and the observation of manners, has added a careful examination of the principles of the human constitution, and of those which ought to regulate the social order, is the only person who is effectually secured against the undue influence of casual associations. By learning to separate what is essential to morality and to happiness from those adventitious trifles which it is the province of fashion to direct, he is equally guarded against the follies of national prejudice, and a weak deviation, in matters of indifference, from established ideas. Upon his mind thus occupied with important subjects of reflexion, the fluctuating caprices and fashions of the times lose their influence. While accustomed to avoid the slavery of local and arbitrary habits, he possesses, in his own genuine simplicity of character, the same power of accommodation to external circumstances, which men of the world derive from

the pliability of their taste, and the versatility of their manners. As the order, too, of his ideas is accommodated, not to what is casually presented from without, but to his own systematical principles, his associations are subject only to those slow and pleasing changes which arise from his growing light, and improving reason. And, in such a period of the world as the present, when the Press not only excludes the possibility of a permanent retrogradation in human affairs, but operates with an irresistible, though gradual progress, in undermining prejudices, and extending the triumphs of philosophy, he may reasonably indulge the hope that Society will every day approach nearer and nearer to what he wishes it to be. A man of such a character, instead of looking back on the past with regret, finds himself more at home in the world, and more satisfied with its order, the longer he lives in it. The melancholy contrasts which old men are sometimes disposed to state between its condition, when they are about to leave it, and that in which they found it at the commencement of their career, arises, in most cases, from the unlimited influence which, in their early years, they had allowed to the fashions of the times, in the formation of their characters. How different from those sentiments and prospects which dignified the retreat of Turgot, and brightened the declining years of Franklin !”

The posthumous manuscripts of Sir M. Hale, who, we have seen, lived to the age of 67, do not indicate any obstinate prejudices in favor of the laws which he had studied in his youth. One of these manuscripts is on the subject of “The over-tenacious holding of laws, notwithstanding apparent necessity for and safety in their change.” He says, “We must remember that laws were not made for their own

sakes, but for the sake of those who were to be guided by them ; and though it is true that they are and ought to be sacred, yet if they be or are become unuseful for their end, they must either be amended, if it may be, or new laws be substituted, and the old repealed, so it be done regularly, deliberately, and so far forth only as the exigence or convenience justly demands it ; and in this respect the saying is true, *Salus populi suprema lex esto.*" He that thinks a state can be exactly steered by the same laws in every kind as it was two or three hundred years ago, may as well imagine that the clothes that fitted him when a child should serve him when he was grown a man. The matter changeth, the custom, the contracts, the commerce, the dispositions, education, and tempers of men and societies, change in a long tract of time, and so must their laws in some measure be changed, or they will not be useful for their state and condition ; and besides all this, *Time* is the wisest thing under heaven. These very laws, which at first seemed the wisest constitution under heaven, have some flaws and defects discovered in them by time. As manufactures, mercantile arts, architecture, and building, and philosophy itself secure new advantages and discoveries by time and experience, so much more do laws which concern the manners and customs of men.

Beattie, in his poem of the Minstrel, has beautifully noticed a distinction between those losses which the bodily frame suffers from age : and those of the intellect and heart of man. The extinction of genius and sympathy will seldom be complete, and will often be entirely avoided, in the most advanced age, where they have been duly fostered and exercised in the spring and summer of life.

But sure to foreign climes we need not range,  
Nor search the ancient records of our race

To learn the dire effects of time and change,  
Which, in ourselves, alas ! we daily trace.  
Yet at the darken'd eye, the wither'd face  
Or hoary hair I never will repine,  
But spare, O Time ! whate'er of mental grace  
Of candor, love, or sympathy divine,  
Whate'er of Fancy's ray, or friendship's flame is mine.

A fair estimate of the comparative intellectual qualities of the old and young may be taken from the writings of Lord Bacon. His observations on the conduct of the affairs of life generally evince very enlarged experience and deep reflection. And, although his style is too much formed upon ancient models, and is too stately and antithetical for modern English composition, yet his writings, independently of the sense, may be studied with great advantage for the energy and propriety of the expressions. "A man that is young in years may be old in hours, if he have lost no time. But that happeneth rarely. Generally youth is like the first cogitations, not so wise as the second. For there is a youth in thoughts as well as in ages. And yet the invention of young men is more lively than that of old, and imaginations stream into their minds better, and, as it were, more divinely. Natures that have much heat, and great and violent desires and perturbations are not ripe for action, till they have passed the meridian of their years. But reposed natures may do well in youth. On the other side, heat and vivacity in age is an excellent composition for business. Young men are fitter to invent than to judge; fitter for execution than for counsel; and fitter for new projects than for settled business. For the experience of age, for things which fall within the compass of it, directeth them, but in things new abuseth them. The



errors of young men are the ruin of business ; but the errors of aged men amount but to this, that more might have been done, or sooner. Young men in the conduct and management of actions, embrace more than they can hold ; stir more than they can quiet ; fly to the end without consideration of the means or degrees ; pursue some few principles which they have chanced upon, absurdly ; care not to innovate, which draws unknown inconveniences ; use extreme remedies at first ; and that which doubleth all errors, will not acknowledge or retract them, like an unready horse that will neither stop nor turn. Men of age object too much, consult too long, adventure too little, repent too soon, and seldom drive business home to the full period ; but content themselves with a mediocrity of success."

Cicero's celebrated treatise on old age was written in his climacterical year. He treats of four imputed evils of old age—1. Disqualification for business ; 2. Bodily infirmities ; 3. Privation of sensual gratifications ; 4. Approach of death. His object is to shew that some of these evils are imaginary, and that the rest are counterbalanced by higher gratifications. As in other works he notices that there is one style of speaking which is adapted to youth, and another which is effective in old age ; so in this treatise he argues that there is one kind of business suitable to the young, and another to the old. He adverts to the etymology of the Roman *Senate*, and observes that a pilot who remains at the helm of a ship is, at least, as usefully employed as any one of the sailors, whatever may be his personal activity. Of the eleven tracts of Cicero, that *De Senectute* is one of five relating to ourselves. It is remarkable, that, among the lenitives of Old Age, Cicero does not advert to the pleasures of domestic society, on which

it will be seen that Jefferson set great store. He had been unhappy in his own family.

One of the principal advantages of age is the possession of *old friends*. They may be deemed more trustworthy because longer tried, and the union is less likely to be severed by caprices or changes of fortune. We have a lively couple of old friends in Burns's story of Tom O'Shanter. Tom and Souter Johnny have been made the subject of sculpture; the figures were exhibited a few years ago in London, and were generally admired.

And at his elbow, Souter Johnny,  
His *ancient*, trusty, drouthy crony;  
Tom lov'd him like a vera brither;  
They had been fou for weeks thegither.

It is gratifying to notice Sir H. Davy, dedicating his later works to friends with whom he states that he had lived on terms of intimacy for upwards of a quarter-century. Darby and Joan, it may be observed, are very popular English characters, as in a song by Rowe—

Old Darby with Joan by his side  
You oft have regarded with wonder,  
He is dropsical, she is sore-eyed,  
Yet they 're ever uneasy asunder.

Together they totter about,  
And sit in the sun at the door,  
And, at night, when old Darby's pipe's out,  
His Joan will not smoke a whiff more.

And most readers have sympathized in the anticipated pleasure of Johnny Gilpin and his wife, after resolving to make their wedding day a holiday, but not till it had been sanctified by "twice ten years" of matrimonial bliss. The feelings we

are now considering are touched upon by Cowper ; it is a fair specimen of his compositions.

Though our years,  
 As life declines, speed rapidly away,  
 And not a year but pilfers, as he goes,  
 Some youthful grace, that age would gladly keep ;  
 A tooth, or auburn lock, and by degrees  
 Their length and colour from the locks they spare ;  
 Th' elastic spring of an unwearied foot,  
 That mounts the stile with ease, or leaps the fence,  
 That play of lungs, inhaling and again  
 Respiring freely the fresh air, that makes  
 Swift pace of steep ascent no toil to me,  
 Mine have not pilfer'd yet ; nor yet impair'd  
 My relish of fair prospect : scenes that sooth'd  
 Or charm'd me young, no longer young, I find  
 Still soothing, and of pow'r to charm me still,  
 And witness, *dear companion of my walks,*  
*Whose arm this twentieth winter I perceive*  
*Fast lock'd in mine,* with pleasure such as love,  
 Confirm'd by long experience of thy worth  
 And well-tried virtues, could alone inspire—  
 Witness *a joy that thou hast doubled long.*  
 Thou know'st my praise of nature most sincere,  
 And that my raptures are not conjur'd up  
 To serve occasions of poetic pomp,  
 But genuine, and art partner of them all.  
 How oft upon yon eminence our pace  
 Has slacken'd to a pause, and we have borne  
 The ruffling wind, scarce conscious that it blew,  
 While admiration, feeding at the eye,  
 And still unsated, dwelt upon the scene.  
 Thence with what pleasure have we just discern'd  
 The distant plow slow-moving, and beside  
 His lab'ring team, that swerv'd not from the track,  
 The sturdy swain diminish'd to a boy !  
 Here Ouse, slow winding through a level plain  
 Of spacious meads with cattle sprinkled o'er,  
 Conducts the eye, along his sinuous course  
 Delighted. There, fast rooted in their bank

Stand, never overlook'd, our favorite elms,  
 That skreen the herdsman's solitary hut ;  
 While far beyond, and overthwart the stream,  
 That as with molten glass, inlays the vale,  
 The sloping land recedes into the clouds ;  
 Displaying on its varied side the grace  
 Of hedge-row beauties numberless, square tow'r,  
 Tall spire, from which the sound of cheerful bells  
 Just undulates upon the list'ning ear ;  
 Groves, heaths, and smoking villages, remote.  
 Scenes must be beautiful, which daily view'd  
 Please daily, and whose novelty survives  
 Long knowledge and the scrutiny of years ;  
 Praise justly due to those that I describe.

In proportion as the union of Old Friends may be considered, as the Scriptures call it, a *medicine* of life, the disruption of such unions cannot but be viewed with deep regret. On such a breach in the friendship of Addison and Steele, Dr. Johnson remarks—"Every reader surely must regret, that these two illustrious friends, after so many years passed in confidence and endearment, in unity of interest, conformity of opinion and fellowship of study, should finally part in acrimonious opposition. Such a controversy was *Bellum plusquam civile*, as Lucan expresses it. Why could not faction find other advocates ? But, among the uncertainties of the human state, we are doomed to number the instabilities of friendship." They quarrelled on account of their opposition on the subject of the Peerage Bill, for fixing permanently the number of Peers ; Steele writing four papers in the *Plebeian* against the bill, and Addison two in the *Old Whig* in favor of it. The *Tatler* was begun by Steele in April, 1709, without the knowledge by Addison of the authorship ; but Addison discovered Steele by a criticism on Virgil in the sixth number. The first number Addison wrote in the *Tatler* was the

eighteenth. Addison wrote in the *Tatler* 42 numbers and Steele 188, and both together 36. Two months after the cessation of the *Tatler*, the *Spectator* was commenced in March, 1711. Addison took under his more immediate care the *Spectator*, Sir R. De Coverley, and Will Honeycomb, and Steele the other members of the Club. Addison wrote 274 numbers in the *Spectator*, and Steele 240, 14,000 copies were distributed daily. The *Spectator* was closed in December, 1712. The *Guardian* was commenced in March, 1713, and was continued till October, in the same year. Addison wrote in it fifty-three papers, and Steele eighty-two. These works are generally considered the commencement of English periodical literature, though the *Observer* of L'Estrange, the *Rehearsals* of Lesley, and, still more, De Foe's *Review*, which contains a *Scandal Club*, were approximations. Indeed Bacon's and Temple's essays may be considered as the types of various papers in the *Spectator*. But Addison and Steele may justly claim to be the founders of our periodical literature. Their literary union has no very similar parallel except that of Beaumont and Fletcher. We can only regret that we are unable to say of them, as of Saul and Jonathan, that "in death they were not divided."

Another instance of a similar disunion between Old Friends occurred between Burke and Fox. On the Bill for the Government of Canada being discussed in the House of Commons, the subject of the French Revolution was introduced by Burke. Fox vindicated it somewhat in the style of the *Vindiciæ Gallicæ* of Macintosh. Burke, on this, replied "hitherto Mr. Fox and myself have often differed upon slight matters, without a loss of friendship on either side; but there is something in this cursed French Revolution which envenoms



every thing." Fox, upon this, whispered, "There is no loss of friendship between us." But Burke, instead of being softened by this conciliatory remark, exclaimed, "There is! I know the price of my conduct; our friendship is at an end."

The quarrel of Brutus and Cassius, as described by Shakespeare, affords scope for very high merit in acting; their reconciliation never fails to delight an audience. In like manner, after the existence of some differences between Curran and Lord Avonmore, arising out of the Irish Union, which Curran opposed and Lord Avonmore supported, Curran, in a speech addressed to Lord Avonmore and other Judges, evinces that the reminiscences of ancient friendship had entirely expelled the spirit of dissension which for a time had influenced his heart.

"And this soothing hope I draw from the dearest and tenderest recollections of my life, from the remembrance of those attic nights and those refectious of the gods which we have spent with those admired and respected and beloved companions who have gone before us;—over whose ashes the most precious tears of Ireland have been shed; yes, my good lord, I see you do not forget them; I see their sacred forms passing in sad review before your memory; I see your pained and softened fancy recalling those happy meetings, when the innocent enjoyment of social mirth expanded into the nobler warmth of social virtue, and the horizon of the board became enlarged into the horizon of man;—when the swelling heart conceived and communicated the pure and generous purpose, —when my slenderer and younger taper imbibed its borrowed light from the more matured and redundant fountain of your's. Yes, my lord, we can remember those nights without any other regret than that they can never more return, for

We spent them not in toys, or lust, or wine :  
But search of deep philosophy,

Wit, eloquence and poesy ;  
 Arts which I lov'd, for they, my friend, were thine !

Besides friends, Dr. Young, in his *Night Thoughts*, has provided for old men, what they could scarcely think of demanding, a new kind of intellectual and moral *Seraglio* :

Lorenzo ! when wast thou at church *before* ?  
 Thou think'st the service *long* : but is it just ?  
 Though just, unwelcome ; thou hadst rather tread  
 Unhallow'd ground ; the Muse, to win thine ear,  
 Must take an air less solemn. She complies.  
 Good conscience ! at the sound the world retires ;  
 Verse disaffects it, and Lorenzo smiles ;  
 Yet has she her *Seraglio* full of charms ;  
 And such as *Age* shall heighten, not impair.  
 Art thou dejected ? Is thy mind o'ercast ?  
 Amid her *fair-ones*, thou the fairest choose,  
 To chase thy gloom.—“ Go, fix some weighty truth ;  
 Chain down some passion ; do some generous good ;  
 Teach ignorance to see, or grief to smile ;  
 Correct thy friend ; befriend thy greatest foe ;  
 Or with warm heart, and confidence divine,  
 Spring up, and lay strong hold on him who made thee”—  
 Thy gloom is scatter'd, sprightly spirits flow ;  
 Though wither'd is thy vine, and harp unstrung.

We have a curious instance, in the author of the celebrated poem just cited, of an attempt to make *fifty* years such a ground of merit or compassion, as to contribute to form a title to court favor. This modest petition, which would give a value to years not calculated in Cicero de *Senectute*, occurs in a letter from the Poet to the Countess of Suffolk. In his Satires, Young writes, that “ Courts can give nothing to the wise and good,” and he intreats “ indulgent God” to allow him, at a distance from the atmosphere of courts, to range the Sylvan scene, where “ on every thorn delightful wisdom grows.” But, in his letter to the countess, he intreats

her to use her influence with the King, in order to procure his majesty's "gracious favor" in *any way* his "goodness" might suggest. He desires the countess to put forward his petition upon the following grounds; abilities, good manners, service, age, want, sufferings, and zeal for His Majesty. He descants on these grounds respectively. With regard to age, he does not make out that "his days are dwindled to the shortest span," like our poor friend whom we have before noticed; but, he says, "As for age, I am turned of *fifty*."

It is time to adduce a few examples of distinguished individuals in illustration of the subject of this chapter. Dryden published his Fables in the same year in which he died, A. D. 1700. He was then upwards of sixty-eight years of age. He adverts to this subject in his preface. He says, "I have the excuse of an old gentleman, who, mounting on horseback before some ladies, when I was present, got up somewhat heavily, but desired of the fair spectators, that they would count four-score and eight before they judged him. By the mercy of God, I am already come within twenty years of this number; a cripple in my limbs, but what decays are in my mind the reader must determine. I think myself as vigorous as ever in the faculties of my soul, *except only my memory*, which is not impaired to any great degree; and if I lose not more of it, I have no great reason to complain. What judgment I had increases rather than diminishes; and thoughts, such as they are, come crowding in so fast upon me, that my only difficulty is to choose or to reject, to run them into verse, or to give them the other harmony of prose; I have so long studied and practised both, that they are grown into a habit, and become familiar to me. In that, though I may lawfully plead some part of the old gentleman's excuse, yet I will re-

serve it till I think I have greater need, and ask no grains of allowance for the faults of this my present work, but those which are given of course to human frailty." One of the pieces in the collection to which the preface is prefixed, *Cymon and Iphigenia*, he commences in the following gallant strain:—

Old as I am, for ladies' love unfit,  
The power of beauty I remember yet,  
Which once inflamed my soul, and still inspires my wit.

Stronger instances of the power of beauty upon older men of great eminence might be cited. A German literary character recently died of love for Fanny Elsler at the age of fourscore; he described the tortures of his passion to Metternich, who was his intimate friend, but a singular person to choose for embosoming himself upon such a subject. There is a tender letter written by Jeremy Bentham, at the age of eighty.

" I am alive: more than two months advanced in my 80th year, more lively than when you presented me, in ceremony, with the flower in the green lane. Since that day, not a single one has passed, (not to speak of nights,) in which you have not engrossed more of my thoughts than I could have wished. Yet, take me for all in all, I am more lively now than then; walking, though only for a few minutes, and for health sake, more briskly than most young men whom you see not unfrequently running. In the enclosed scrap there are a few lines, which I think you will read with pleasure. I have still the pianoforte, harpsichord, on which you played at Bowood: as an instrument, though no longer useful, it is still curious, as an article of furniture, not unhandsome; as a legacy will you accept it? I have a ring, with some of my snow-white hair in it, and my profile, which every body says is like. At

my death, you will have such another : should you come to want, it will be worth a good sovereign to you. You will not I hope, be ashamed of me : The last letter, I received, from Spanish America, (it was in the present year,) I was styled *Legislador del Mundo*, and petitioned for a code of laws : It was from the man to whom that charge was committed by the legislature of his country, Guatemala. Every minute of my life has been long counted : and now I am plagued with remorse at the minutes which I have suffered you to steal from me. In proportion as I am a friend to mankind, (if such I am, as I endeavour to be,) you, if within my reach, would be an enemy. I have, for some years past, had a plan for building a harem in my garden, upon the Panopticon principle. The premiership waits your acceptance : A few years hence, when I am a little more at leisure than at present, will be the time for executing it. For these many years I have been invisible to all men, (not to speak of women,) but for special reasons. I have lost absolutely all smell, as much as possible all taste, and swarm with petty infirmities. But it seems as if they ensured me against serious ones. I am, still am I gay, eminently so, and ‘the cause of gaiety in other men.’ Oh, what an old fool am I, after all, not to leave off, since I can, till the paper will hold no more. This you have done at sixty, and at half six miles distance. What would you have done present and at sixteen?”

The earliest period at which the manuscript of the *Paradise Lost* was seen, was in 1665, when Milton was 59. The allusions to his loss of sight and to the “evil days” of the Restoration shew that the Poem was written late in life. Locke published his *Essay on the Human Understanding* and his letters on Toleration in 1690-92, when he was about 60 years



of age. The *Canterbury Tales* were the last composition of Chaucer, when he was upwards of 60.

Lord Chesterfield, in his latter days, suffered much from bodily infirmities, in some measure occasioned by the excesses of youth. It is gratifying, however, to collect from his correspondence, that literary taste and acquisitions can make the down-hill journey of life enjoyable, even where it may be debarred the pleasures of conversation and society.

“All mineral waters, and the whole *materia medica*, lose their efficacy upon my shattered carcase; and the enemy within is too hard for them. I bear it all with patience, and without melancholy, because I must bear it, whether I will or no. Physical ills are the taxes laid upon this wretched life; some are taxed higher, and some lower, but all pay something. My philosophy teaches me to reflect, how much higher, rather than how much lower, I might have been taxed. How gentle are my physical ills, compared with the exquisite torments of gout and stone! The faculties of my mind are, thank God! not yet much impaired; and they comfort me in my worst moments, and amuse me in the best. I read with more pleasure than ever; perhaps, because it is the only pleasure I have left. For since I am struck out of living company by my deafness, I have recourse to the dead, whom alone I can hear; and I have assigned them their hours of audience. *Solid folios* are the people of business, with whom I converse in the morning: *Quartos* are the easier mixed company, with whom I sit after dinner: And I pass my evenings in the light and often frivolous chit-chat of small *octavos* and *duodecimos*. This, upon the whole, hinders me from wishing for death, while other considerations hinder me from fearing it.”

The letter which contains the extract just cited, was written to Mr. Dayrolles. The letters of Lord Chesterfield which are most celebrated, were written to an illegitimate son who married whilst abroad, without his father's knowledge, and who died in 1768, five years before his father, at Dresden. His widow published the letters without permission. Lord Chesterfield left his disposable property to his nearest relation, a nephew. This nephew was addicted to horse-racing: In consequence of which Lord Chesterfield introduced a clause into his will, forfeiting the property to the Dean and Chapter of Westminster, if his devisee slept a single night at Newmarket." He selected the Dean and Chapter of Westminster, because he thought that they had over-reached himself in some affair of a lease or purchase, and therefore judged that they would look sharply after the forfeiture.

Lord Chesterfield's liveliness in old age may be collected from his masquerade letters to the Countess of Suffolk. It may be premised that when he was a younger man, in 1728, we find him in gallant correspondence with her Ladyship. The Countess, in her letters to various correspondents, complains of giddiness and face-ache, Lord Chesterfield replies from the Hague—"To show you how desirous I am to contribute as much as I can to your perfect recovery, if you can find means to give me that offending head, and that provoking face you complain so much of, I will most willingly send you mine in return by the first courier; and though you say they are of no use to the present owner, I assure you they would be of singular use to me. The head would do my master's business, and the face would do my own, and I would find employment enough for them both, not to give them time to ache."

We read, in a masquerade letter written by Lord Chesterfield, in the character of his footman, to Lady Suffolk, when he was 73, and the Countess five years older. "My Lord was very much fatigued with his journey, not being (as I heard him say) what he was *thirty* years ago—I believe he might have said *fifty*. However, he is pretty well for him; but often complains that he feels a sensible decay both of body and mind, and, between you and I, I think not without reason; for I, who see him every day, can, notwithstanding, observe a considerable alteration in him, and by no means for the better." In an answer to this letter, written by Horace Walpole, in the character of Lady Suffolk's maid, we have—"And my lady says, and so says Mister Rusil, our butler, that your lord may be ashamed of himself—so he may—to say he grows old; for he niver was spritlier in his born days." In another letter from Lord Chesterfield under disguise of the footman we have—"Now madam, it is time to give you some account of my lord, for whom you shew so friendly a regard. He is as well as can be expected in his condition; as is usually said of ladies in childbed, or in great affliction for the death of somebody they did not care for. Now I heard his lordship say very lately at table, that he was *seventy-three* complete, with a *shattered* carcase, as he was pleased to call it. To say the truth, I believe my lord did *live a little too freely formerly*. But I can assure your ladyship that he is now very regular, and even more so, I believe, than I am. But he is still very cheerful; and, as an instance of it, a gentleman having said at table that the women dressed their heads here three or four stories high—"Yes," said my lord, "and I believe every story is inhabited, like the lodging houses here; for I observe a great deal of scratching;" I

thought this comical enough to tell your ladyship, and to confess the truth, I repeated it as my own to some of my brethren of the cloth, and they relished it wonderfully."

Ben Jonson, writing subsequently to Lord Bacon's fall, after describing the effects of his eloquence and the fear of all his auditors lest he should conclude, observes—"In his adversity I ever prayed God to give him strength; for greatness he could not want." Lord Bacon it has been before mentioned lived to the age of sixty-six, and I do not know that any decay of his faculties from the joint effects of age and misfortune is intimated any where except in the following scurrilous lines, which are a curious specimen of the wit of the day. They were written on the occasion of Lord Bacon publishing his apothegms.

When learned Bacon wrote essays,  
He did deserve, and hath the praise,  
But now he writes his apothegms,  
Surely he doses, or he dreams.  
One said, St. Albans now is grown unable,  
And is in the high-road way to *Dunce-table*. (*Dunstable,*  
*next stage from St. Albans.*)

Till within a very short period of his death Lord Bacon was engaged in making philosophical experiments. This appears from the following letter, the last thing he ever wrote, and the last notice of any kind we have of him before his death, which occurred within a few days after, at Lord Arundel's house, where the letter was written.

MY VERY GOOD LORD,

I was likely to have had the fortune of Caius Plinius the elder, who lost his life by trying an experiment about the burning of the mount Vesuvius: for I was also desirous to try an experiment or two, touching the conservation and

induration of bodies. As for the experiment itself, it succeeded excellently well; but in the journey, between London and Highgate, I was taken with such a fit of casting, as I knew not whether it were the stone, or some surfeit, or cold, or indeed a touch of them all three. But when I came to your lordship's house, I was not able to go back, and therefore was forced to take up my lodging here, where your house-keeper is very careful and diligent about me, which I assure myself your lordship will not only pardon towards him, but think better of him for it. For indeed your lordship's house was happy to me, and I kiss your noble hands for the welcome which I am sure you give me to it, &c.

I know how unfit it is for me to write to your lordship with any other hand than my own; but by my troth my fingers are so disjointed with this fit of sickness, that I cannot steadily hold a pen."

Lord Mansfield presided as Chief Justice in the Court of King's Bench till he was 76, as Sir M. Hale had done till he was 66, nor were their high judicial reputations at all impaired by the effects of age. Sir Edward Coke had been removed from his office of Chief Justice by the tyranny of Charles I. But we find him in his 77th year, in his place in the third Parliament of that King, taking a leading part in the preparation of that second Charter of English liberties the *Petition of Rights*. It was Sir E. Coke that originally proposed that second *Magna Charta*. The following is an extract of his speech on the occasion :

"We sit now in Parliament, and therefore must take his Majesty's *word*, no otherwise than in a parliamentary way, that is, of a matter agreed on by both houses—his Majesty sitting on his throne in his robes, with his crown on his head,



and sceptre in his hand, and in full parliament ; and his royal assent being entered upon record, *in perpetuam rei memoriam*. This was the royal word of a King in parliament, and not a word delivered in a chamber, and out of the mouth of a secretary at the second hand ; therefore I motion, that the House of Commons *more majorum*, should draw up a Petition, *de droict*, to his Majesty ; which being confirmed by both houses, and assented unto by his Majesty, will be as firm an act as any. Not that I distrust the King, but that I cannot take his trust but in a parliamentary way."

Lord Somers had the chief management of the business of the Union with Scotland in 1707, when he was near 60, the age at which he relinquished office. At the critical period of Queen Anne's death in 1714, two years before his own death, he came to the Privy Council, and contributed to prevent any attempt being made to disturb the succession of the House of Hanover.

Sir John Maynard was an excellent specimen of our veteran lawyers. He had fought the arduous battle of constitutional liberty through a great part of the reigns of the Stuarts. On his introduction to king William after the Revolution, that prince observed to him that he had survived all the great lawyers of his time : He answered that, " if his Majesty had not come to England, he should have survived the law itself." He is made, by Hurd, one of the speakers, together with Lord Somers and Bishop Burnet, in a dialogue on the constitution ; in the course of the dialogue he frequently adverts to his advanced age. This Dialogue by Bishop Hurd has attracted much notice, and the more so, on account of the liberal sentiments with which it originally abounded, and which were composed before his elevation to the mitre, having been ex-

punged or pared down in subsequent editions : Porson made a careful collection of the different editions.

Lord Chatham exercised the extraordinary powers of his eloquence almost to his last moments. He died in 1778, when advanced in his 70th year. The picture painted by Copley, the father of Lord Lyndhurst, of his illness in the House of Lords, represents what occurred only four days before his death. He had made a vigorous speech on the same evening, but observed, in the course of it, that he was making an effort almost beyond the powers of his constitution. He was rising again to reply, when after two or three unsuccessful efforts to stand, he fainted and fell on his seat.

Horace Walpole, who upon this subject cannot claim implicit credit, represents, that Lord Chatham used to assume the appearances of age and infirmity for effect, even beyond what was occasioned by his advanced years. "The winter was unusually warm, yet he was dressed in an old coat and waistcoat of beaver laced with gold ; over that a red surtout, the right arm lined with fur, and appendant with many black ribbons, to indicate his inability of drawing it over his right arm, which hung in a crape sling, but which, in the warmth of speaking, he drew out with unlucky activity, and brandished as usual. On his legs were riding stockings. In short, no aspiring cardinal ever coughed for the tiara with more specious debility."

It was not long before his death that Lord Chatham rose even beyond himself in a speech on the employment of Indians in the war against the Americans. It may be said of Lord Chatham's speeches, as was said by *Æschines* of *Demosthenes'* oration against himself ;—how much more powerful would you have thought it, if you could have heard him ! A line or two of the commencement and conclusion will probably

satisfy the reader, that, as delivered by Lord Chatham, the speech must have produced an electrical effect :

“ I am astonished ! Shocked to hear such principles confessed—to hear them avowed in this house or in this country.” After invoking the “ holy prelates of our religion to do away these iniquities from among us. Let them perform a lustration ; let them purify this house, and this country, from this sin.” He concludes—“ My Lords, I am *old and weak* and at present unable to say more ; but my feelings and indignation were too strong to have said less, I could not have slept this night in my bed, nor reposed my head on my pillow, without giving this vent to my eternal abhorrence of such preposterous and enormous principles.”

Frederick the Great died at the age of 75, after a reign of 46 years, and having been subjected to extreme fatigues, and anxieties of body and mind both before and after he began to reign. Mirabeau says that “ he was one of the most perfect moulds that nature ever formed.” His body was not in later life altogether equal to the energies of his mind. On quitting Berlin upon his last campaign, he addressed his officers in these terms. “ My infirmities will prevent my making the campaign as I should have done during the vigor of my age. I shall, in marches, make use of a carriage ; but on the day of battle, you will be sure of seeing me on horseback among you as formerly.” He, indeed, used *rouge* on reviews and other public occasions, being probably dissatisfied that he should appear older in his person than he was in his mind and spirits. His death was much accelerated by his neglect of the regimen which Zimmerman and other physicians prescribed ; persisting to the last, in eating to excess bonilli-beef a la Russe, Polenta, and eel-pics, like a

young man or an ostrich. Nevertheless he transacted his customary public business, and had passages read to him from the classical authors till the day of his death.

As regards merely martial vigor and exertion, it has been displayed on various occasions to a later period of life. The Duke of Schomberg who was killed at the Boyne in bringing up a Regiment that had fallen into confusion, and whose death is the subject of a well known engraving, was 82. He used to court the society of the younger officers, observing that when young he conversed with old men to gain experience, and, when old, with young men, to keep up his spirits.

Turenne, (the *god-like Turenne*, as Pope calls him) was killed whilst reconnoitering on the eve of an intended battle, by a cannon ball, in the 64th year of his age. The opinion entertained by his army of his martial spirit may be collected, among a multitude of anecdotes, from the cry of the soldiers, when the General who succeeded called a Council of war. —“*Lachez la Pie*, (the name of Turenne’s horse) elle nous conduira.” The Great Condè said, that his successor had, by his want of ability, made a better funeral oration upon Turenne than had been done by Flechier. The French Funeral orations, it may be observed, contain some of the finest specimens of modern eloquence: Bourdaloue, Bossuet, Flechier, and Massillon attained the highest reputation in this line. Flechier has been compared to Isocrates, and Bossuet to Demosthenes. Of Turenne’s *age* Flechier says, “Il a rendu tous les services qu’on peut attendre d’un esprit ferme et agissant, quand il se trouve dans un corps robuste et bien constitué. Il a eu dans la jeunesse toute la prudence d’un age avancé; et dans un age avancé, toute la vigueur de la jeunesse—ses jours ont été pleins, selon les termes de l’Ecriture; et

comme il ne perdit pas ses jeunes années dans la mollesse et dans la volupté, il n'a pas été contraint de passer les dernières dans l'oisiveté et la faiblesse."

Samuel must have been an old man, when without any assistance, he "*hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord in Gilgal.*" His age thus appears: The reason for the Israelites wanting a king was that Samuel could not go his circuits regularly as a judge on account of his age, but sent his sons, who took bribes: now, Samuel never met Saul again, after the human sacrifice, until the Witch of Endor, as it is said, "*brought him up*" very much as he himself observed to his "*disquiet.*" The Witch said "*an old man cometh up,*" and Saul immediately knew him. *Hewing in pieces*, in those days, must have required considerable bodily strength, if Samuel did what is related in the book of Judges of a Levite with regard to his concubine, whom he hewed flesh and bone into twelve pieces, and sent a piece to each of the tribes of Israel.

It is remarkable that four of the most distinguished leaders of the American revolution, Washington, Franklin, Jefferson and Adams, lived to be old men, and appear to have retained their faculties and enjoyments to the end of their lives. Washington died in his 67th year in December 1799. In 1783 he made his memorable resignation of his military command, addressing the Senate in terms strikingly contrasted with those of Cromwell on entering the House of Commons, after he had finished *his* campaigns. "Having now finished the work assigned me, I retire from the great theatre of action, and bidding an affectionate farewell to this august body, under whose orders I have so long acted, I here offer my commission, and take my leave of all the employments of public life." He was however called to the office of President of the



United States from 1788 to 1796. The evening of his life was chiefly occupied in the pursuits of agriculture at his country-house, called Mount Vernon.

Franklin died in 1790 having attained the age of 84 years and three months. He had been engaged in public functions for 50 years, and was the Plenipotentiary sent by the United States to France in 1776, when he was upwards of 70. He remained in the vicinity of Paris during all the critical period which terminated with the peace between England and America in 1785. The last five years of his life he spent in Philadelphia ; for three of those years he held the office of President of that state. His memory showed no symptoms of decay, and he took a part almost to the last, in public transactions of a political, or philosophical nature. He died, with great piety and gratitude to God ; as a proof of his pious sentiments, it may be mentioned that he brought forward a motion, which was unsuccessful, that the deliberations of the legislature should always be preceded by prayers. He was to the time of his death engaged in several humane undertakings, particularly with regard to prisons, and slavery ; like Jefferson he disbelieved the divine origin of the Christian religion, but never took any pains to propagate his opinions on the subject.

Jefferson, who was the individual that drew the *Declaration of Independence*, lived to be invited to the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of American Independence in June 1826. He and Adams differed in their representations as to some historical circumstances connected with the union, forty-seven years after the event : On that occasion he observes, that Adams was then 88 and himself 80, so that either of their memories might be liable to impeachment, but that he had the possession of notes which he took at the time. Jefferson was

61 years in the public service. He held the office of President after he was sixty years of age. Among his letters, after he was seventy, we find one to Adams in which he mentions that there were not above half a dozen persons living besides themselves who had signed the Declaration of Independence. In the course of the same letter, he says, after observing that France was a den of Robbers and England a nest of Pirates—"But whither would senile garrulity be leading me? Into politics of which I have taken final leave. I think little of them and say less. I have given up newspapers in exchange for Tacitus and Thucydides, for Newton and Euclid, and I find myself much happier. I live in the midst of my grandchildren, one of whom has lately promoted me to be a great-grandfather." The pleasure of being a great-grandfather will be clearly admitted to be peculiar to old age.

According to the law of America, Functionaries holding high judicial offices are obliged to vacate them on attaining the age of sixty. This happened to Chancellor Kent, one of the most eminent of American Jurists—on his retirement from the highest judicial station in America on account of his age, he assumed the duties of a Professor of Law. His lectures or commentaries, which have been published, would afford as good an answer as that given by Sophocles, when his relatives instituted a process to take from him the management of his affairs on account of his old age: That Poet read the Judges some lines from his unfinished *Ædipus Coloneus*.

We should exceed the limits of this work, were we to describe the favorable incidents in the old age of distinguished individuals of our own country, following the example of Cicero, with regard to the Greeks and Romans, in the treatise *De Senectute*. I will in conclusion of this subject only refer to

the lives of two Englishmen who have, perhaps, acquired more fame than any of our countrymen in foreign embassies, Sir H. Wotton and Sir W. Temple.

Sir H. Wotton's life is written by Isaac Walton, the celebrated Angler. At the age of 57 he was made Provost of Eton; he lived to the age of 72. There is a well known letter of his to Milton, giving the poet directions for travelling, And praising his *Comus*, which had been just published. He occupied himself in writing a life of Luther, till King Charles induced him to lay it aside, and undertake a history of England. There is a curious circumstance in Wotton's life which may, perhaps, be adducible as an instance of the partial failure of memory in old people. His epitaph, composed by himself, may, at this day, be seen in the Chapel of Eton College. It is this,

Hic jacet  
Hujus sententiæ primus auctor.  
Disputandi pruritus est ecclesiarum scabies.  
Nomen alias quære.

It appears that, contrary to his assertion, he was not the first author of the sentiment by which he was desirous of being known to posterity. Isaac Walton's observations on the matter are amusing. "Grant that in his various reading he had met with this or a like sentence, yet reason mixed with charity should persuade all readers to believe, that Sir H. Wotton's mind was then so fixed on that part of the communion of saints which is above, that an holy lethargy did surprise his memory." Sir H. Wotton was rather unfortunate in his apothegms. His definition of an Ambassador, "A person sent to *lie* abroad for the benefit of his country," was well nigh closing abruptly his diplomatic career, soon after it had

commenced. But he appears to have spent the last years of his life most agreeably.—“Eton College,” Walton says, “was to Sir H. Wotton like a quiet harbour to a seafaring man.” He does not fail to notice the Provost’s propensity for *fishing* : It was another of Sir H. Wotton’s apothegms, that “he would rather live five May months, than forty Decembers.”

Sir W. Temple terminated his diplomatic career at the age of 47, after which he addicted himself to literary pursuits and gardening. His compositions during this period still rank among the most approved models of English composition, holding a middle place between Tillotson and Addison in regard to ornament, and following with both of them, the simple style of writing. He had a peculiar talent of preserving with his readers the ease and interest of familiar conversation. It is well known that Swift, when a young man, was an inmate at Sir W. Temple’s house, and had a legacy of £100, from him ; he had also the charge of Sir W. Temple’s posthumous papers. In gardening, in literature, in neutrality under the various circumstances connected with the revolution, Temple and Evelyn much resembled each other ; their country residences were both in Surrey, and not far distant, and yet there are no traces of any acquaintance between them. After twenty years of active public service, Sir W. Temple enjoyed nineteen years of literary retirement, stedfastly refusing all temptations of office. His will contains the following clause—“I desire that my heart may be interred six feet under ground on the south-east side of the stone dial in my little garden at Moor Park.”

It may be observed that several instances of persons wishing to be buried in their own grounds have occurred within memory—Baskerville the printer and Hollis the munifi-

cent publisher were so buried—Horne Tooke's wishes in this respect were not complied with ; though he had composed an epitaph, in which he styles himself “ late proprietor, and now occupier of this spot.” Horne Tooke died at 77, holding his literary and philosophical parties till the last : Like Evelyn, he paid great attention to the rearing of fruit at Wimbledon, where he retired after a life of political agitation, including a trial for high treason.

This chapter may be properly concluded by adverting to those contemplations which are so becoming in old age, and which inaptitude for active pursuits, and the experience of the vanity of the principal objects of human competition enable the aged to pursue more willingly and steadily. It has been said, indeed, by Dr. Young, in his *Night Thoughts*, that the first *suspicion* even which mankind have of their real character and fit appellation does not occur before the age of 30.

At thirty man *suspects* himself a *fool* ;  
Knows it at *forty*.

Swift, in his *Puppet-show*, agrees that the *suspicion* of the man of thirty is well founded ; this poem presents another version of “ All the world's a stage.”

The life of man to represent  
And turn it all to ridicule,  
Wit did a Puppet-show invent,  
Where the chief actor is a *Fool*.

Barrow thus expresses himself on this subject.

“ As a ship which hath long been tost and weather-beaten, which is shattered in its timber, and hath lost much of its rigging, should do nothing in that case but work towards the port, there to find its safety and ease ; so should a man, who



having passed many storms and agitations of the world, is grievously battered and torn with age, strive only to die well, and get safe into the harbour of eternal rest."

Poetry has shed a pleasing light on this state of contemplative exclusion, under the imaginary pictures of hermits and hermitages.—A person indeed, who, in the present day, should turn hermit, would probably find his friends removing him from his hermitage to some cell of still closer confinement. So a hair-shirt which was worn by Cardinal Wolsey, and many old religious persons in former times would, in the present day, be sometimes exchanged for a straight waistcoat.

But every elderly person will have strong inducements to build a hermitage in his own breast, to which he may occasionally retire from the world. On the subject of hermitages Milton thus concludes his *Il Penseroso*.

And may at last my weary age  
Find out a peaceful *hermitage*.  
The hairy gown and mossy cell,  
Where I may sit, and rightly spell  
Of every star that heaven doth shew,  
And every herb that sips the dew,  
Till old experience doth attain,  
To something like prophetic strain.

A hermit's invitation and a view of his dwelling is given by Goldsmith with that simplicity, and picturesque description, heightened by touches of a tender and moral kind, in which he is unrivalled.

Then turn to-night, and freely share  
Whate'er my cell bestows,  
My rushy couch and frugal fare,  
My blessing and repose.

No flocks that range the valley free  
To slaughter I condemn,  
Taught by that power that pities me  
I learn to pity them.

But from the mountain's grassy side  
A guiltless feast I bring ;  
A scrip with herbs and fruits supplied,  
And water from the spring.

Far in a wilderness obscure  
The lonely mansion lay ;  
A refuge to the neighbouring poor,  
And strangers led astray.

No stores beneath its humble thatch  
Required a master's care ;  
The wicket opening with a latch  
Received the harmless pair.

And now, when busy crowds retire  
To take their evening rest,  
The hermit trimm'd his little fire,  
And cheer'd his pensive guest ;

And spread his vegetable store,  
And gaily pressed and smil'd,  
And skill'd in legendary lore,  
The lingering hours beguiled.

Around in sympathetic mirth  
Its tricks the kitten tries,  
The cricket chirrups from the hearth  
The crackling faggot flies.

The following description by Warton is perhaps the most complete which our poetry presents :

Beneath this stony roof reclin'd  
I sooth to peace my pensive mind :  
And while to shed my lowly cave,  
Embow'ring elms their unbrage wave ;

And while the maple dish is mine ;  
The beechen cup, unstain'd with wine ;  
I scorn the gay licentious crowd,  
Nor heed the toys that deck the proud.

Within my limits lone and still,  
The black-bird pipes in artless trill.  
Fast by my couch, congenial guest,  
The wren has wove her mossy nest ;  
From busy scenes and brighter skies,  
To lurk with innocence, she flies ;  
Here hopes in safe repose to dwell,  
Nor aught suspects the Sylvan cell.

At morn I take my custom'd round,  
To mark how buds yon shrubby mound ;  
And every op'ning primrose count  
That trimly paints my blooming mount .  
Or o'er the sculptures, quaint and rude,  
That grace my gloomy solitude,  
I teach in winding wreaths to stray  
Fantastic ivy's gadding spray.

At eve, within yon studious nook,  
I ope my brass-embossed book,  
Pourtrayed with many a holy deed  
Of martyrs, crown'd with heavenly meed :  
Then as my taper waxes dim,  
Chant, ere I sleep, my measur'd hymn ;  
And, at the close, the gleams behold  
Of parting wings bedropt with gold.

While such pure joys my bliss create,  
Who but would smile at guilty state ?  
Who but would wish his holy lot  
In calm oblivion's humble grot ?  
Who but would cast his pomp away,  
To take my staff and amice gray ;  
And to the world's tumultuous stage  
Prefer the blameless hermitage ?

Beattie wrote a poem called the *Hermit* ; and he introduces a hermit into his *Minstrel*. Spenser has also described a hermitage. We have quoted from Parnell's *Hermit* in our chapter on *Infancy* and *Childhood*. So that our Poets have not been wanting in their allurements, under the fanciful pictures of hermits and hermitages—to self-communion, and the contemplation of nature, and nature's omnipotent Architect.

In ancient times the hermits of real life were not always old ; age had in fact little to do with their fanaticism. It may be interesting to take a view of the first hermits, described by Gibbon in a manner which few writers of ancient or modern history could have rivalled.

“ The monks were divided into two classes : the *Cænobites*, who lived under a common, and regular, discipline ; and the *Anchorets*, who indulged their unsocial, independent, fanaticism. The most devout, or the most ambitious, of the spiritual brethren, renounced the convent, as they had renounced the world. The fervent monasteries of Egypt, Palestine, and Syria, were surrounded by a *Laura*, a distant circle of solitary cells ; and the extravagant penance of the *Hermits* was stimulated by applause and emulation. They sunk under the painful weight of crosses and chains ; and their emaciated limbs were confined by collars, bracelets, gauntlets, and greaves of massy, and rigid iron. All superfluous incumbrance of dress they contemptuously cast away ; and some savage saints of both sexes have been admired, whose naked bodies were only covered by their long hair. They aspired to reduce themselves to the rude and miserable state in which the human brute is scarcely distinguished above his kindred animals : and a numerous sect of Anchorets derived their name from their humble practice of *grazing* in the fields of

Mesopotamia with the common herd. They often usurped the den of some wild beasts whom they affected to resemble ; they buried themselves in some gloomy cavern which art or nature had scooped out of the rock ; and the marble quarries of Thebais are still inscribed with the monuments of their penance. The most perfect hermits are supposed to have passed many days without food, many nights without sleep, and many years without speaking ; and glorious was the man (I abuse that name) who contrived any cell, or seat, of a peculiar construction which might expose him, in the most inconvenient posture, to the inclemency of the seasons.

“ Among these heroes of the monastic life, the name and genius of *Simeon Stylites* have been immortalized by the singular invention of an aerial penance. At the age of thirteen, the young Syrian deserted the profession of a shepherd, and threw himself into an austere monastery. After a long and painful noviciate, in which Simeon was repeatedly saved from pious suicide, he established his residence on a mountain about thirty or forty miles to the east of Antioch. Within the space of a *mandara*, or circle of stones, to which he had attached himself by a ponderous chain, he ascended a column, which was successively raised from the height of nine, to that of sixty feet, from the ground. In this last, and lofty, station, the Syrian Anchoret resisted the heat of thirty summers and the cold of as many winters. Habit and exercise instructed him to maintain his dangerous situation without fear or giddiness, and successively to assume the different postures of devotion. He sometimes prayed in an erect attitude, with his out-stretched arms, in the figure of a cross ; but his most familiar practice was that of bending his meagre skeleton from the forehead to the feet ; and a curious spectator,



after numbering twelve hundred and forty-four repetitions, at length desisted from the endless account. The progress of an ulcer in his thigh might shorten, but it could not disturb, this celestial life, and the patient hermit expired, without descending from his column. I must not conceal a piece of ancient scandal concerning the origin of this ulcer. It has been reported, that the devil, assuming an angelic form, invited him to ascend, like Elijah, into a fiery chariot. The saint too hastily raised his foot, and Satan seized the moment of inflicting this chastisement on his vanity.\*

“A prince who should capriciously inflict such tortures, would be deemed a tyrant; but it would surpass the power of a tyrant, to impose a long and miserable existence on the reluctant victims of his cruelty. This voluntary martyrdom must have gradually destroyed the sensibility both of the mind and body; nor can it be presumed that the fanatics, who torment themselves, are susceptible of any lively affection for the rest of mankind. A cruel unfeeling temper has distinguished the monks of every age and country: their stern indifference, which is seldom mollified by personal friendship, is inflamed by religious hatred; and their merciless zeal has strenuously administered the holy office of the Inquisition.”

But the hermits of imagination are always represented as very old—this will be apparent from *Gil Blas*’s account of the two gaol-birds who set up for hermits:—

“*En même temps nous découvrîmes et gagnâmes une allée d’arbres assez touffus, qui nous conduisit au pied*

\* Whoever wishes to observe the utmost limits of human presumption, will find them in the lives of persons, who leaving to the partakers of amusements they call prophane, the adoration of the Supreme Being, for their elected selves have challenged his familiarity. Numerous examples of this kind of impudence occur in the lives of Wesley and Wilberforce.

d'une montagne où nous trouvâmes un *Ermitage*. C'étoit une grande et profonde grotte que le temps avoit percée dans la montagne ; et la main des hommes y avoit ajouté un avant-corps de logis bâti de rocailles et de coquillages, et tout couvert de gazon. Les environs étoient parsemés de mille sortes de fleurs qui parfumoient l'air ; et l'on voyoit auprès de la grotte une petite ouverture dans la montagne, par où sortoit avec bruit une source d'eau qui couroit se répandre dans une prairie. Il y avoit à l'entrée de cette maison solitaire un bon *ermite qui paroissoit accablé de vieillesse*. Il s'appuyoit d'une main sur un bâton, et de l'autre il tenoit un rosaire à gros grains, de vingt dizaines pour le moins. Il avoit la tête enfoncée dans un bonnet de laine brune à longues oreilles ; et sa barbe, plus blanche que la neige, lui descendoit jusqu'à la ceinture. Nous nous approchâmes de lui. " Mon père, lui dis-je, vous voulez bien que nous vous demandions un asile contre l'orage qui nous menace ?—Venez, mes enfants, répondit l'anachorète, après m'avoir regardé avec attention ; cet ermitage vous est ouvert, et vous y pourrez demeurer tant qu'il vous plaira.—Pour votre cheval, ajouta-t-il en nous montrant l'avant-corps de logis, il sera fort bien là. Le cavalier qui m'accompagnait y fit entrer son cheval, et nous suivîmes le *vieillard* dans la grotte." Nous n'y fûmes pas plus tôt qu'il tomba une grosse pluie, entremêlée d'éclairs et de coups de tonnerre épouvantables. L'ermite se mit à genoux devant une image de saint Pacôme qui étoit collée contre le mur, et nous en fîmes autant à son exemple. Cependant le tonnerre cessa : nous nous levâmes ; mais, comme la pluie continuait, et que la nuit n'étoit pas forte éloignée, le *vieillard* nous dit : " Mes enfants, je ne vous conseille pas de vous remettre en chemin par ce temps-là, à moins que vous n'ayez des affaires bien pressantes." Nous répon-

dîmes, le jeune homme et moi, que nous n'en avions point qui nous défendissent de nous arrêter, et que si nous n'appréhendions pas de l'incommoder, nous le prierions de nous laisser passer la nuit dans son ermitage.—“ Vous ne m'incommoderez point, répliqua l'ermite : c'est vous seuls qu'il faut plaindre. Vous serez fort mal couchés, et je n'ai à vous offrir qu'un repas d'anachorète.” Après avoir ainsi parlé, le saint homme nous fit asseoir à une petite table ; et, nous présentant quelques ciboules, avec un morceau de pain et une cruche d'eau : “ Mes enfants, reprit-il, vous voyez mes repas ordinaires ; mais je veux aujourd'hui faire un excès pour l'amour de vous.” A ces mots il alla chercher un peu de fromage et deux poignées de noisettes qu'il étala sur la table. Le jeune homme, qui n'avait pas grand appétit, ne fit guère d'honneur à ces mets. “ Je m'aperçois,” lui dit l'ermite, “ que vous êtes accoutumé à de meilleures tables que la mienne, ou plutôt que la sensualité a corrompu votre goût naturel. J'ai été comme vous dans le monde : les viandes les plus délicates, les ragoûts les plus exquis n'étoient pas trop bons pour moi ; mais, depuis que je vis dans la solitude, j'ai rendu à mon goût toute sa pureté. Je n'aime présentement que les racines, les fruits, le lait, en un mot, ce qui faisoit la nourriture de nos premiers pères ” Tandis qu'il parloit de la sorte le jeune homme tomba dans une profonde rêverie. L'ermite s'en aperçut. “ Mon fils,” lui dit-il, “ vous avez l'esprit embarrassé : ne puis-je pas savoir ce qui vous occupe ? Ouvrez-moi votre cœur. Ce n'est point par curiosité que je vous en presse ; c'est la seule charité qui m'anime. Je suis dans un *âge à donner des conseils*, et vous êtes peut-être dans une situation à en avoir besoin.”—“ Oui, mon père, répondit le cavalier en soupirant : j'en ai besoin sans doute, et je veux suivre les vôtres, puisque vous avez la bonté de me les offrir.

Je crois que je ne risque rien à me découvrir à un homme tel que vous.” — “ Non, mon fils,” dit le vieillard, “ vous n’avez rien à craindre ; on me peut faire toutes sortes de confidences.” Alors le cavalier lui parla en ces termes.

Quand don Alphonse eut achevé le triste récit de ses malheurs, le vieil ermite lui dit : “ Mon fils, vous avez eu bien de l’imprudence de demeurer si longtemps à Tolède. Je regarde d’un autre œil que vous tout ce que vous m’avez raconté, et votre amour pour Séraphine me paroît une pure folie. Croyez-moi, il faut oublier cette jeune dame, qui ne sauroit être à vous. Cédez de bonne grâce aux obstacles qui vous séparent d’elle, et vous livrez à votre étoile, qui, selon toutes les apparences, vous promet bien d’autres aventures. Vous trouverez sans doute quelque jeune personne qui fera sur vous la même impression, et dont vous n’aurez pas tué le frère.” Il alloit ajouter à cela beaucoup d’autres choses pour exhorter don Alphonse à prendre patience, lorsque nous vîmes entrer dans l’ermitage un autre ermite chargé d’une besace fort enflée. Il revenoit de faire une copieuse quête dans la ville de Cuença. Il paroissoit plus jeune que son compagnon, et il avoit une barbe rousse et fort épaisse. “ Soyez le bienvenu, frère Antoine, lui dit la vieil anachorète : quelles nouvelles apportez-vous de la ville ? — D’assez mauvaises, répondit le frère rousseau en lui mettant entre les mains un papier plié en forme de lettre ; ce billet va vous en instruire.” Le vieillard l’ouvrit, et, après l’avoir lu avec toute l’attention qu’il méritoit, il s’écria : “ Dieu soit loué ! puisque la mèche est découverte, nous n’avons qu’à prendre notre parti. Changeons de style,” poursuivit-il, seigneur don Alphonse, en adressant la parole au jeune cavalier ; “ vous voyez un homme en butte comme vous aux caprices de la fortune. On me mande de

Cuença, qui est une ville à une lieue d'ici, qu'on m'a noirci dans l'esprit de la justice, dont tous les suppôts doivent dès demain se mettre en campagne pour venir dans cet ermitage s'assurer de ma personne. Mais ils ne trouveront point le lièvre au gîte. Ce n'est pas la première fois que je me suis vu dans de pareils embarras ; grâce à Dieu, je m'en suis presque toujours tiré en homme d'esprit. Je vais me montrer sous une nouvelle forme ; car, tel que vous me voyez, je ne suis rien moins qu'un ermite et qu'un vieillard." En parlant de cette manière, il se dépouilla de la longue robe qu'il portoit, et l'on vit, dessous, un pourpoint de serge noire avec des manches tailladées. Puis il ôta son bonnet, détacha un cordon qui tenoit sa barbe postiche, et prit tout à coup la figure d'un homme de vingt-huit à trente ans. Le frère Antoine, à son exemple, quitta son habit d'ermite, se défit, de la même manière que son compagnon, de sa barbe rousse, et tira d'un vieux coffre de bois, à demi pourri, une méchante soutanelle dont il se revêtit. Mais représentez-vous ma surprise lorsque je reconnus dans le vieil anachorète le seigneur don Raphaël, et dans le frère Antoine mon très-cher et très-fidèle valet Ambroise de Lamela. "Vive Dieu ! m'écriai-je aussitôt, je suis ici, à ce que je vois, en pays de connoissance."—"Cela est vrai, seigneur Gil Blas, me dit don Raphaël en riant : vous retrouvez deux de vos amis lorsque vous vous y attendiez le moins. Je conviens que vous avez quelque sujet de vous plaindre de nous ; mais oublions le passé, et rendons grâces au ciel qui nous rassemble. Ambroise et moi nous vous offrons nos services ; ils ne sont point à mépriser. Ne nous croyez point de méchantes gens. Nous n'attaquons, nous n'assassinons personne ; nous ne cherchons seulement qu'à vivre aux dépens d'autrui ; et si voler est une action injuste, la nécessité en cor-



rige l'injustice. Associez-vous avec nous, et vous mènerez une vie errante. C'est un genre de vie fort agréable quand on sait se conduire prudemment. Ce n'est pas que, malgré toute notre prudence, l'enchaînement des causes secondes ne soit tel quelquefois qu'il nous arrive de mauvaises aventures. N'importe, nous en trouvons les bonnes meilleures. Nous sommes accoutumés à la variété des temps, aux alternatives de la fortune."

"Seigneur cavalier, poursuit le faux ermite en parlant à don Alphonse, nous vous faisons la même proposition, et je ne crois pas que vous deviez la rejeter, dans la situation où vous paroissez être; car, sans parler de l'affaire qui vous oblige à vous cacher, vous n'avez pas sans doute beaucoup d'argent?—Non, vraiment, dit don Alphonse; et cela, je l'avoue, augmente mes chagrins.—Eh bien! reprit don Raphaël, ne nous quittez donc point: vous ne sauriez mieux faire que de vous joindre à nous. Rien ne vous manquera, et nous rendrons inutiles toutes les recherches de vos ennemis. Nous connoissons presque toute l'Espagne, pour l'avoir parcourue: nous savons où sont les bois, les montagnes, tous les endroits propres à servir d'asile contre les brutalités de la justice." Don Alphonse les remercia de leur bonne volonté; et, se trouvant effectivement sans argent, sans ressource, il se résolut à les accompagner. Je m'y déterminai aussi, parce que je ne voulus point quitter ce jeune homme, pour qui je me sentis naître beaucoup d'inclination. Nous convînmes tous quatre d'aller ensemble, et de ne nous point séparer. Il fut mis en délibération si nous partirions à l'heure même, ou si nous donnerions auparavant quelques atteintes à une outre pleine d'un excellent vin que le frère Antoine avoit apportée de la ville de Cuença le jour précédent: mais Raphaël, comme celui qui avoit le plus d'expérience, représenta qu'il falloit, avant toutes choses, penser à notre

sûreté ; qu'il étoit d'avis que nous marchassions toute la nuit pour gagner un bois fort épais qui étoit entre Villardesa et Almodabar ; que nous ferions halte en cet endroit, où, nous voyant sans inquiétude, nous passerions la journée à nous reposer. Cet avis fut approuvé. Alors les faux ermites firent deux paquets de toutes les hardes et provisions qu'ils avoient, et les mirent en équilibre sur le cheval de don Alphonse. Cela se fit avec une extrême diligence. Après quoi nous nous éloignâmes de l'ermitage, laissant en proie à la justice les deux robes d'ermite, avec la barbe blanche et la barbe rousse, deux grabats, une table, un mauvais coffre, deux vieilles chaises de paille, et l'image de saint Pacôme.

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